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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

A STUDY OF PARENTAL INTERVIEWS  
ON  
BILINGUAL PROGRAMS FOR VIETNAMESE STUDENTS

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO  
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION  
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION  
DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION AND  
EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

BY  
JOSEPH HIEU

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

MAY 1997

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## CHAPTER I

### **The Research Problems**

#### Introduction

The United States of America is a nation of immigrants who came from all over the world. According to the 1995 U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform's *Report to the Congress*, immigrants in the United States often create new businesses and generate other activities that promote the renewal of American society. Immigrants also help strengthen America's relations with other nations of the world. Immigration enriches "American scientific, literacy, artistic and other cultural resources" (U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform, 1995, p.1). Immigrants now account for 35 percent of the net annual population increase; immigrants and their children account for more than 50 percent (Fix and Zimmermann, 1993). The number of first- and second-generation immigrants between the ages of 5-14 will almost double in the year 2010 (see Figure 1.1). As a result, rising numbers of school-age children who are limited-English-proficient (LEP) will enter our nation's schools. How can our school systems respond to the education needs of

these new immigrant children? This chapter will explore ways and means of addressing this issue.

### The United States: A Nation of Immigrants

The motto of the United States of America is "E Pluribus Unum." This is a Latin phrase meaning "Out of Many, One." The motto signifies that the people who make up the United States come from all over the world to share their hopes and dreams as one nation. Today, there are about 260 million people living in the United States (United States Bureau of the Census, 1995).

Americans share an interesting background. They are all immigrants – people who came here from other lands – or descendants of immigrants. This is just as true of the Native Americans who first populated the continent thousands of years ago as it is of today's most recent arrivals. From their countries of origin, the settlers brought different languages, cultures, and customs. In America, they found a common language and way of life. All of these individuals, with their different backgrounds and ideas, form one nation and one people (see Table 1.2).

### The "Melting Pot" Theory

All immigrants in America are members of ethnic groups, people of the same race or nationality who share a common and distinctive cultural heritage. All face the problem of adapting their ethnic backgrounds to their new homeland in

the United States. A number of people in the United States hold to the idea that ethnic cultures melt together or vanish. As a result, a strong assimilationist idea has dominated American society since the British controlled most American institutions in the early history of this nation.

The American assimilationist idea envisions a society in which culture, ethnicity, religion, and race are not important identifiers. Group affiliations, rather, are based on such variables as social, economic, or political affiliations and other related factors. The assimilationist idea has deeply influenced American life and is symbolized by the concept of the "melting pot." This concept was celebrated in Zangwill's play, "The Melting Pot," staged in New York City in 1908 (Banks, 1991).

#### The "Salad Bowl" Theory

For many years the United States was looked upon as a melting pot. People thought that immigrants lost their old languages, customs, and beliefs and became "Americanized." But this idea was true only in part. Immigrants do become Americans, but the "melting" process is never really completed (see Figure 1.10). Instead, each immigrant group keeps part of its cultural heritage. Each group also contributes some of its heritage to the United States in the form of customs and ideas brought by them and mixed with the ideas developed in America (see Table 1.1).

This wealth of diversity has given a special energy and richness to the United States. Even though the strong assimilationist idea of American society contributed greatly to the making of one nation out of disparate ethnic and immigrant groups, it has not eradicated ethnic and cultural differences and is not likely to do so in the future. America, it seems, is not a "melting pot" but a "salad bowl," where all Americans are able to blend together yet retain their own uniqueness (Mattson, 1992). This "salad bowl" concept works well if everyone can be tolerant of various cultures, races, and ethnic backgrounds.

#### The "Old Immigration" (1830-1880)

The first official count, or census, of the people in the United States was made in 1790. About 4 million people lived here at the time. Between 1790 and 1830, the population of the nation more than tripled, reaching nearly 13 million. Almost all of this growth was the result of births in the United States. During this period, fewer than 400,000 immigrants came.

However, over the next 50 years, more than 10 million immigrants arrived in the United States. The majority came from the nations of northern and western Europe. Smaller numbers also came from Canada and Latin America. This immigration of people from the 1830s to the late 1880s is called the "Old Immigration." Immigrants who came during

this period had a tendency to learn English quickly and to become Americanized as soon as possible (Janzen, 1994). Immigrants who came during these years included the following:

*The Germans.* One of the largest groups of immigrants to come to America during the 1800s were the Germans. About 1.5 million came between 1815 and 1860. They emigrated for a number of reasons. Some came because of crop failures in their homeland; others came in search of political liberty. Still others, such as the German Jews, came in search of religious freedom. Many Germans settled in the Middle West, where they helped build farms and factories. They also helped to build cities such as Milwaukee, St. Louis, and Cincinnati.

*Immigrants from northern Europe.* In the 1800s, large numbers of Scandinavians also came to the United States. Almost 1 million Scandinavians arrived here between 1820 and the late 1880s. They came to find better farmland and economic opportunity. The Swedes were the largest group of Scandinavian immigrants. Other settlers came from Norway, Finland, and Denmark. Many Scandinavian immigrants moved to the Middle West, especially to Wisconsin and Minnesota. There they became dairy and grain farmers, miners, and lumber workers.



*The Irish.* Over 2 million Irish arrived here between 1815 and 1860. Many came because disease destroyed the potato crops in Ireland and famine resulted. The Irish settled in the large cities along the Atlantic coast. Many helped build the canals and railroads that bound the United States together (Stewart, 1993).

#### The "New Immigration" (1880-1920)

The largest number of immigrants to America came between the late 1880s and 1920s. More than 20 million newcomers settled here then. This period of immigration is often called the "New Immigration." The people who came during this period were mainly from nations in southern and eastern Europe. Included in this group were Russians, Poles, Italians, Austrians, Hungarians, Greeks, Bulgarians, and Slavs. For the most part, the people of the New Immigration were poor and had few skills. They usually settled in large cities. Like earlier immigrants, they contributed to the United States' cultural and economic life. Immigrants who came in this period had a tendency to retain their languages, cultures, and religions, trying not to become too Americanized (Janzen, 1994). Immigrants who arrived during this period included the following:

*The Italians.* One of the largest groups of people who came during the New Immigration period were the Italians.

Some were craft workers, but most had been farmers. Many of these immigrants were poor and willing to take any kind of work. They settled in the large cities along the Atlantic coast.

*Immigrants from eastern Europe.* Many of the newcomers were Russians. They came in search of a better life. Some were Jews who came for religious and economic reasons. Many of these immigrants were skilled workers. For the most part, they settled in large cities.

A large number of people came from other parts of eastern Europe. Newcomers arrived from Poland, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, and Greece. They came to find better economic opportunities.

*Mexican Americans.* Thousands of Mexicans lived in the Southwest when that area became part of the United States in the mid-1800s. Most of them stayed and became citizens of the United States. Others worked on the railroads or as laborers in the cities.

*Asian Americans.* Almost all of the early Asian immigrants were from China and Japan. Except for some Armenians, Turks, and Syrians, very few immigrants came from other Asian nations until the 1940s. Most of the early Chinese and Japanese immigrants settled on the West Coast,

where they maintained their rich ethnic traditions and customs (see Figure 1.3).

Chinese immigrants began coming to America even before the New Immigration. The first group of about 35,000 arrived in the 1850s and settled on the West Coast. They helped build the western railroads and did other kinds of physical labor. Chinese immigrants continued to arrive in the late 1800s. They farmed or started small businesses.

Japanese immigrants began to arrive in America in the late 1800s. About 40,000 Japanese came between 1900 and 1910. Most stayed in California, where they built productive farms and a flourishing fishing industry (Banks, 1991).

#### The New Non-European Immigration (1940s-1960s)

*Immigrants from Asia.* During the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, Asians began to arrive from the Philippines, Hong Kong, Korea, and India and settled in many states (see Figure 1.4).

*Immigrants from the Caribbean.* Immigrants continued to come from Europe, Canada, and Mexico during the mid-1900s. But many also came from Central and South America and Africa. Since 1950, large numbers have come from the islands of the Caribbean, especially from Puerto Rico and Cuba. Unlike other newcomers, the people of Puerto Rico have

come here as citizens of the United States, that island being part of the United States since 1898. Puerto Ricans can move freely between their island home and the mainland of the United States. During the late 1940s and 1950s large numbers of Puerto Ricans came to the mainland to find jobs. Most of the newcomers settled in New York, Chicago, and other large cities. A few were craft workers and the owners of small businesses. But most were poor and had few skills. When conditions in Puerto Rico improved during the 1960s, many Puerto Ricans returned home.

In 1959, about 40,000 people from Cuba arrived in the United States. They came after the revolution led by Fidel Castro brought a communist government to Cuba. In the years since then, hundreds of thousands of Cubans have found homes in various parts of the United States. A large majority have settled in Florida. Many have started new businesses and entered almost every profession.

#### Immigration Today (1970s-1990s)

During the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s Asians have also come from Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. Most of the newcomers were educated, skilled people in search of better economic opportunities. Some were escaping the unsettled conditions in their mother countries (see Figures 1.5 and 1.6).

Immigration into the United States has increased significantly since the 1965 Immigration Reform Act became

effective in 1968. Most new immigrants are from Spanish-speaking Latin American nations and from Asia rather than from Europe, the continent from which most American immigrants came in the past. Between 1981 and 1990, 87 percent of legal immigrants to the United States came from non-European nations; only about 10 percent came from Europe. Moreover, 87 percent of the immigrants into the United States during this period came from Asia (38 percent) and nations in the Americas (49 percent). Most Asian immigrants came from China, Korea, the Philippines, and India. Mexico and nations in the Caribbean were the leading sources of immigrants from the Americas (United States Bureau of the Census, 1994).

The population of ethnic groups of color is increasing at a much faster rate than the general population (see Figure 1.2). If current trends continue, it is projected that the Asian American population will nearly double between 1990 and the year 2000, whereas the total United States population will increase by only 20 percent (United States Bureau of the Census, 1993).

#### Statement of the Problem

##### Problems of the American Classroom in the 1990s

American classrooms are experiencing the largest influx of immigrant students since the turn of the century. Between 1981 and 1990, about 7,388,100 legal immigrants came

to the United States (United States Bureau of the Census, 1994). A large but undetermined number of illegal or undocumented immigrants also enter the United States each year. The influence of an increasingly ethnically diverse population on the nation's schools, colleges, and universities is and will continue to be enormous. In fifty of the nation's largest urban public school systems, African Americans, Hispanics, Asian Americans, and other non-white students made up 76.5 percent of the student population in 1992 (Council of the Great City Schools, 1994).

#### Problems of Educating Minority Students

Students of color will make up about 46 percent of the nation's student population by 2020 (Pallas, 1989). Most teachers now in the classroom or in teacher educational programs are likely to have students from diverse ethnic, cultural, and racial groups in their classrooms during their careers. This is true for both inner-city and suburban teachers. A major goal of education is to transform the challenges of ethnic, cultural, and racial diversity into educational and societal opportunities. To reach this goal, teachers will need to acquire new knowledge, skills, and attitudes, not the least important of which is an understanding of bilingual education techniques, objectives, and capabilities.

## Need for the Study

### Asian Immigrants Today (1980s-1990s)

Asian Americans, in percentage terms, increased faster than any other United States ethnic group between 1980 and 1990 (see Figure 1.2). The number of Asians in the United States increased from 3,466,847 in 1980 to 6,908,638, a 99 percent increase compared to a 53 percent increase for Hispanics and a 7 percent increase for the non-Hispanic population (United States Bureau of the Census, 1993). The number of Asians immigrating into the United States has increased substantially since the Immigration Reform Act became effective in 1968.

Five Asian nations – Vietnam, the Phillippines, mainland China, India, and Korea – were among the top fifteen nations supplying immigrants to the United States in 1992 (United States Immigration and Naturalization Service, 1993). The number of immigrants entering the United States from Vietnam (77,735) was exceeded only by Mexico (213,802). Immigrants of Asian origin from these five nations were also among the largest groups entering the United States between 1981 and 1992 (United States Bureau of the Census, 1993). The number of Chinese immigrants settling in the United States from China and Hong Kong has also increased substantially since 1965. In 1965, for example, only 4,769 immigrants from China settled in the United States and

83,900 from Hong Kong (United States Bureau of the Census, 1994).

#### Southeast Asian Immigrants Today (1980s-1990s)

The Southeast Asians who have settled in the United States have come from three contiguous nations – Vietnam, Kampuchea (Cambodia), and Laos. Europeans once referred to this area as Indochina because it had been historically influenced by India and China. The Southeast Asian Americans consist of Vietnamese, Laotians, Kumpuchians, Hmong, and ethnic Chinese refugees who fled to the United States in the aftermath of the Vietnamese War (see Figure 1.9). In the decade before 1975, only about 20,000 Vietnamese immigrants came to the United States (Wright, 1989). It is not known how many immigrants came from Laos and Kampuchea during that period. The first refugees from Southeast Asia fled to the United States in 1975. Their journey to the United States was directly related to the ending of the Vietnam War and the resulting communist governments in Vietnam, Laos, and Kampuchea (Banks, 1996).

The number of Vietnamese, Laotians, and Kampuchians in the United States grew significantly between 1981 and 1992. Vietnam was one of ten nations that sent the most legal immigrants to the United States during that period. Nearly 1 million (821,200) immigrants from Vietnam, Laos, and Kampuchea settled in the United States between 1981 and



1992. Most of these immigrants (65 percent) came from Vietnam.

### Vietnamese Immigrants Today (1980s-1990s)

The United States had a population of 615,000 Vietnamese Americans in 1990. After the United States participation in the Vietnam War ended (1973) and communists took control of Vietnam (1975), thousands of Vietnamese refugees rushed to the United States. Only 225 Vietnamese emigrated to the United States in 1965, but more than 87,000 came in 1978. Between 1981 and 1989, 534,000 Vietnamese immigrants settled in the United States (United States Bureau of the Census, 1990).

### Language and Cultural Barriers

The cultures of immigrant children are embedded in their mother tongue. Each language holds a world view and the identity of the speaker. To learn a new language in a new environment, a child must develop a new identity (Krashen, 1996).

As children enter the United States from distant lands, their first experience is the clash between their primary culture and the norms of their new home. In a land where relatively few citizens can speak or write anything but English, language is a primary source of conflict. The behaviors and traditions carried here from native lands also

act to magnify the friction between newcomers and native-born Americans (Cummins, 1995).

Immigrant children bring into the classroom their cultural scripts for roles modeled on the material and social environment of their previous lives. Their norms of behavior are part of the lives they no longer live but cannot forget. To survive, they must strive to integrate the old scripts with the new.

In short, the demographic change has already begun to have a dramatic impact especially in large urban areas. Our educational institutions should review policy and procedure to accommodate the change, to enable responsive service delivery, and to enable effective social cohesion to emerge from the multi-culturalism (Silverman, 1997).

### Rationale for the Study

#### The Demographic Imperative

The ethnic texture of the United States is changing substantially. The United States Census projects that ethnic minorities will make up 29.4 percent of the United States population by the year 2000 (United States Bureau of the Census, 1993a). The changing ethnic texture of the United States population has major implications for all of the nation's institutions, including schools, colleges, universities, and the work force (see Figures 1.7 and 1.8). These institutions must be restructured and transformed in

order to meet the needs of the different kinds of peoples who will use and work in them.

People of color will make up one-third of the net additions to the United States' labor force between 1985 and 2000. By the year 2000, 21.8 million of the 140.4 million people in the United States' labor force will be people of color, and 80 percent of the new entrants will be women and immigrants (United States Bureau of the Census, 1991).

### Diversity: An Opportunity and a Challenge

The kind of cultural, ethnic, racial, and religious diversity that Western nations are experiencing is both an opportunity and a challenge to their societies and institutions, including schools, colleges, and universities. When groups with different cultures and values interact within a society, ethnocentrism, racism, and religious bigotry as well as other forms of institutionalized rejection and hostility occur. In several nation-states throughout the world – including the United States, the United Kingdom, and Germany – incidents of attacks on ethnic and cultural minorities increased significantly during the late 1980s and early 1990s (Banks & Banks, 1995; Figueroa, 1995; Hoff, 1995).

Ethnic and cultural diversity, however, is also an opportunity. It can enrich a society by providing new ways to solve problems and to view our relationship with the

environment and each other. Western nation-states will be able to create societies with overarching goals that are shared by diverse groups only when these groups feel that they have a real stake and place in their nation-states and that their states mirror their own concerns, values, and ethos. A multicultural educational curriculum that reflects the cultures, values, and goals of the groups within a nation will contribute significantly to the development of a healthy national identity (Banks, 1995).

### Education for Survival in the 21st Century

Current school curricula are not preparing most students to function successfully within the ethnically and culturally diverse world of the future.

A major goal of education for survival in a multicultural global society is to help students acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to participate in the world's social, political, and economic life so that as adults from diverse ethnic, cultural, and religious groups they will be politically empowered and structurally integrated into their societies. Helping students to acquire the competencies and commitments needed to participate in effective civic action in order to create equitable national societies is the most important goal of multicultural education in the twenty-first century (Lessow-Hurley, 1996).

The curricula within our nation's schools must be transformed so that it accurately reflects the ethnic, cultural, and racial diversity within the United States. To respond adequately to the ethnic realities within the nation and the world, curricula should help students develop decision-making and social-action skills (Banks, 1996).

### Purposes of the Study

This study serves three major purposes. First, it analyzes the attitudes of Vietnamese parents toward bilingual programs for their children in the Chicago public secondary schools. Second, it examines the relationship between parental opinions of bilingual programs and demographic factors such as pre-emigration levels of education and income, era of emigration, and hardships encountered during the journey to America. Third, it elicits recommendations from parents for improvement of their children's education.

### Limitations of the Study

Several limitations have become apparent in the course of this study. One restriction is that differences of opinion among different families may be attributable to background characteristics (i.e., different socioeconomic backgrounds of the families). Another restriction of this study is the use of small samples and the fact that it is limited to the city of Chicago's public secondary schools.

This study is also delimited to a population of about 300 Vietnamese parents of bilingual students and only 10 families were randomly selected for the interviews. Because of the relatively small sample, the results may not generalize to the total population.

### Significance of the Study

This study has the potential of being instrumental in providing administrators and teachers in public schools with information about the viewpoints of Vietnamese parents toward the use of Vietnamese in teaching students who are not proficient in English when they enroll in the school system. The investigation may provide educators a basis for developing more appropriate approaches to the problems of bilingual education through the establishment of a forum for discussion and interaction, the results of which may be beneficial in future curricular design.

One potentially important application of this study is to help improve the educational opportunities of limited-English-proficient (LEP) students through an overhaul of textbook publishers' policies. Publishers need to recognize the changing requirements of schools and produce books that catch the attention and interest of students of varied backgrounds.

Another application of the study will be to alert politicians that a review of regulatory controls must be

made in light of ethnic changes. Related to this consideration is the need to review funding priorities, to provide for better qualified bilingual teachers, and to provide improved teaching materials.

### Definitions of Terms

The following terms are often used in this paper and in the field of bilingual education.

**Amerasians**—children born to mixed Asian and American parents. Specifically in this book, the term refers to children born in Vietnam during the Vietnam War to Vietnamese mothers and American fathers.

**ancestor worship**—the tradition of showing respect for ancestors of the past five generations through special prayers and ceremonies on anniversaries of their deaths and holidays.

**bilingual education**—a means of providing instruction or other educational assistance through the primary language of the student and of providing instruction in a second language. Bilingual education programs may be developmental/maintenance or transitional as defined below.

**bilingual lead teacher**—a teacher in charge of curriculum and instruction matters pertaining to bilingual education at a high school. He or she is free from teaching responsibilities.

**bilingual program**—a generic term that refers to both a transitional bilingual education (TBE) program and a transitional program of instruction (TPI).

**bilingual resource center**—a high school room where LEP students may be assigned for tutoring during their study hall periods. This room may also contain reference materials and copies of textbooks used in the bilingual program.

**bilingual teacher**—an individual who holds an Illinois Transitional Bilingual Certificate, an Illinois Standard Elementary Certificate with bilingual approval, or an Illinois Standard Secondary Certificate with bilingual approval and who is working in a bilingual program. All bilingual teachers must meet the criteria established by the Department of Human Resources of the Chicago public schools.

**bilingual vocational resource specialist**—a high school teacher or counselor who is bilingual and who is in charge of all matters pertaining to vocational education as they apply to LEP students.

**boat people**—Vietnamese refugees who left or escaped Vietnam by boat after 1978.

**California Achievement Test (C.A.T.)**—a battery of tests whose math computation sub-test may be used to assess the math skills of non-English-language-background students.



**Cloze Test**—an oral or written test that integrates language and content to measure comprehension.

**Confucianism**—an ethical system brought to Vietnam by the Chinese; beliefs include ancestor worship, filial piety (obedience to parents), the appointment of rulers based on education and merit, and submission to the authority of just rulers.

**core subject instruction**—instruction in the content areas of English, mathematics, social studies, and science.

**countries of first asylum**—countries where Vietnamese refugees sought temporary refuge while awaiting final settlement (Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, and Thailand).

**developmental/maintenance bilingual program**—an instructional program that provides LEP and English-proficient students with the opportunity to learn and to continue the development of their native language while acquiring another language.

**English as a Second Language (ESL)**—specialized instruction designed to teach English to students whose native language is other than English. English as a Second Language instruction develops listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills.

**English-proficient**—a term that refers to students who possess the English language skills necessary to participate fully in an all-English general program of instruction. English-proficient students may be monolingual English speakers or students who are bilingual.

**ESL teacher**—an individual who holds one of the following: an Illinois Standard Special Certificate for teaching ESL, an Illinois Standard Elementary Certificate with ESL approval, or an Illinois Standard Secondary Certificate with ESL approval and is working in a bilingual program. All ESL teachers must meet the criteria established by the Department of Human Resources of the Chicago Public Schools.

**extended family**—a household consisting of at least three generations (children, parents, grandparents); common in traditional Vietnamese families.

**first-wave refugees**—Vietnamese immigrants who came to America in 1975-1978 after the end of the Vietnam War.

**full-time TBE student**—an LEP student who is enrolled in an ESL class and in at least two core subject area courses taught in the student's native language.

**Functional Language Assessment (FLA)**—an English oral language proficiency assessment that may be used for all students from non-English-language backgrounds.

**home language**—the language used in the home by the student and by the student's parents or legal guardians.

**Home Language Survey (HLS)**—pairs of questions used to determine if a student comes from an English- or non-English-speaking background.

**Illinois Goal Assessment Program (IGAP)**—a state-mandated testing program in which a battery of tests is administered to students in grades 3, 6, 8, and 11 each spring.

**immigrants**—people who leave their country of origin for permanent settlement elsewhere to pursue better opportunities (compare with refugees).

**Individual Entry Assessment (IEA)**—an assessment procedure established to determine whether or not a student needs bilingual services. The IEA includes measurements of native-language proficiency, English proficiency, and math skills.

**Indochinese**—peoples of Vietnam, Kampuchea (formerly Cambodia), and Laos on the Indochina peninsula in Southeast Asia, many of whom came to the United States as refugees after 1975.

**Language Assessment Scales (LAS)**—an instrument used to measure a student's proficiency in listening to, speaking, reading, and writing English.

**limited English proficient (LEP)**—a term used to refer to students of non-English-speaking backgrounds whose comprehension, speaking, reading, or writing proficiency in English is below the average English proficiency level of students of the same age and/or grade whose first or home language is English.

**Local School Council (LSC)**—pursuant to Public Act 85-1418, each public school in Chicago is to be governed primarily by a Local School Council. A high school Council is made up of 11 elected members and the school principal.

**Minimum Proficiency Skills Test (MPST)**—a test of basic skills that each student must pass in order to graduate.

**monolingual student**—a student who speaks one language only. This term is often used to refer to a student who speaks English only.

**native language**—the first language learned by an individual.

**native language arts**—elective high school courses that focus on the student's mastery of his/her native-language skills.

**native language assistance**—the use of the native language to assist LEP students.

**native language instruction**—the use of the student's native language as a medium of instruction.

**non-English-language background**—a term used to refer to students whose native language is other than English or students who come from homes where a language other than English is spoken in daily interaction, either by the students themselves or by their parents or legal guardians.

**parole**—a method of bypassing the usual rules for screening immigrants, used to admit Vietnamese refugees to the United States before 1980 by special decree of the Attorney General.

**part-time TBE student**—a part-time bilingual student is one who is enrolled in no more than two ESL and/or bilingual classes. The student may or may not be enrolled in an ESL class. If he/she is enrolled in a core-subject class in a TBE program, it is because he/she is less than one year below the district norm in that area.

**reeducation camps**—places in Vietnam where certain South Vietnamese were sent against their will after 1976 to be forcibly taught Communist beliefs.

**refugees**—people who flee their country in haste or are forced to leave due to political beliefs or fear of persecution and seek safe haven (often temporary) elsewhere; in the United States, they are eligible for special government benefits (compare with *immigrants*).

**second-wave refugees**-Vietnamese immigrants who came to the United States from 1979 to 1982 during the peak years of the boat people crisis.

**secondary migration**-the movement of refugees or immigrants from their original place of settlement to a second location within their adopted country.

**sheltered English**-a teaching approach used in subject-area classes for LEP students because it is possible that little or no native-language instruction is provided in a TPI. In the sheltered English approach, the teacher speaks English only, uses a controlled vocabulary, and uses only those grammatical and syntactical structures with which the students are familiar. The teacher lectures as little as possible and makes extensive use of visual aids and demonstration and experimentation techniques. All tests are objective and may be oral, written, or by demonstration. The students are graded on their knowledge of the subject matter presented and not on their proficiency in English.

**sponsor**-a family, individual, organization, company, or committee that takes financial and moral responsibility for helping a refugee household get settled in the United States or Canada.

**Student Reclassification Recommendation Form (SRRF)**—a form used to request one of a particular set of changes in a student's bilingual category.

**Test of Achievement and Proficiency (TAP)**—a battery of six tests administered annually to high school students. LEP students enrolled in bilingual education programs for three years or more, regardless of their ESL placement, are required to take the TAP.

**Tet**—Vietnamese New Year celebrated in late January or early February.

**transitional bilingual education (TBE)**—transitional bilingual education programs provide instruction or other educational assistance in the native language while developing competency in English through English as a Second Language instruction. LEP students receive content-area instruction in their native language until they speak, understand, read, and write English well enough so that instruction can be mostly in English. Transitional bilingual education programs use the student's native language and English for subject-matter instruction until the student can function completely in the all-English General Program of Instruction (GPI).

**Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) Program**—an instructional program mandated by the State of Illinois.

This program must be offered by those schools in which 20 or more LEP students from the same non-English-language background are enrolled.

**Transitional Program of Instruction (TPI)**—an instructional program mandated by the State of Illinois. This program must be offered by those schools in which less than 20 LEP students from the same non-English-language background are enrolled, unless the school opts to offer a TBE program to the students.

**Viet Cong**—South Vietnamese who fought on the side of the Communist North Vietnamese during the Vietnam War.

**VOLAG**—a private voluntary agency that works with the United States government to coordinate refugee sponsorship and resettlement.



## Tables and Figures

**Table 1.1**

### ASIAN IMMIGRANTS TO THE UNITED STATES (1961-1992)

Country of Birth	1961-1970	1971-1980	1981-1992	Total
Cambodia (Kampuchea)	1,200	8,400	122,500	132,100
China	96,700	202,500	490,300	789,500
Hong Kong	25,600	47,500	83,900	157,000
India	31,200	176,800	343,600	551,600
Japan	38,500	47,900	59,200	145,600
Korea	35,800	272,000	360,700	668,500
Laos	100	22,600	164,300	187,000
Pakistan	4,900	31,200	91,900	128,000
Philippines	101,500	360,200	619,900	1,081,600
Thailand	5,000	44,100	78,900	128,000
Vietnam	4,600	179,700	534,400	718,700

**Source:** U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1994. *Statistical Abstract of the United States* (114th ed.). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Table 1.2

POPULATION OF ETHNIC GROUPS  
IN THE UNITED STATES (1970, 1980, AND 1990)

Ethnic Group	1970 Population	1980 Population	1990 Population
Total	203,211,926	226,504,825	248,710,000
White Americans*	177,748,975	188,340,790	199,686,000
African Americans	22,580,289	26,488,218	29,986,060
Hispanics	9,072,602	14,608,673	22,354,000
Mexican Americans	4,532,435	8,740,439	13,496,000
Puerto Ricans	1,429,396	2,013,945	2,728,000
Cubans	544,600	803,226	1,044,000
Other Spanish Origin			5,086,000
Jewish Americans			5,981,000
American Indians	792,730	1,361,869	1,878,000
Eskimos		42,149	57,000
Aleuts		14,177	24,000
Asians or Pacific Islanders	431,583	812,178	7,274,000
Chinese Americans	336,731	781,894	1,645,000
Filipino Americans	588,324	716,331	1,407,000
Japanese Americans	69,510	357,393	848,000
Korean Americans		387,223	799,000
Asian Indians			815,000
Vietnamese Americans			615,000
Native Hawaiians	100,179	172,346	211,000

**Source:** U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1994. *Statistical Abstract of the United States* (114th ed.). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

\*This figure includes the roughly 53% of Hispanics who classified themselves as White in the 1990 Census.

Table 1.3

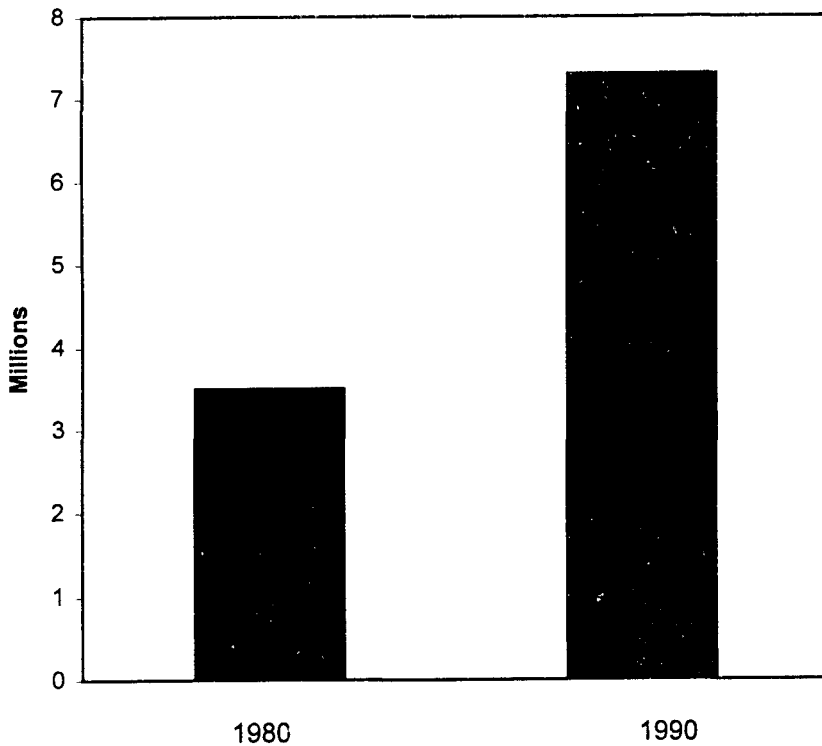
## ASIAN POPULATION (1980-2020)

	1980		1990		2000		2010		2020	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	%		#	%
Chinese	812	23	1,124	22	1,440	21	1,749	20	2,033	19
Filipino	782	23	1,269	25	1,783	26	2,296	26	2,802	26
Japanese	716	21	833	16	936	13	1,025	11	1,078	10
Asian Indian	387	11	622	12	875	13	1,128	13	1,376	13
Korean	357	10	711	14	1,092	15	1,479	17	1,874	18
Vietnamese	245	7	525	11	830	12	1,139	13	1,456	14
TOTALS	3.3M		5.1M		6.9M		8.8M		10.6M	

**Source:** *American Demographics*, "The Fastest Growing Minority," May 1985.

**Figure 1.1**

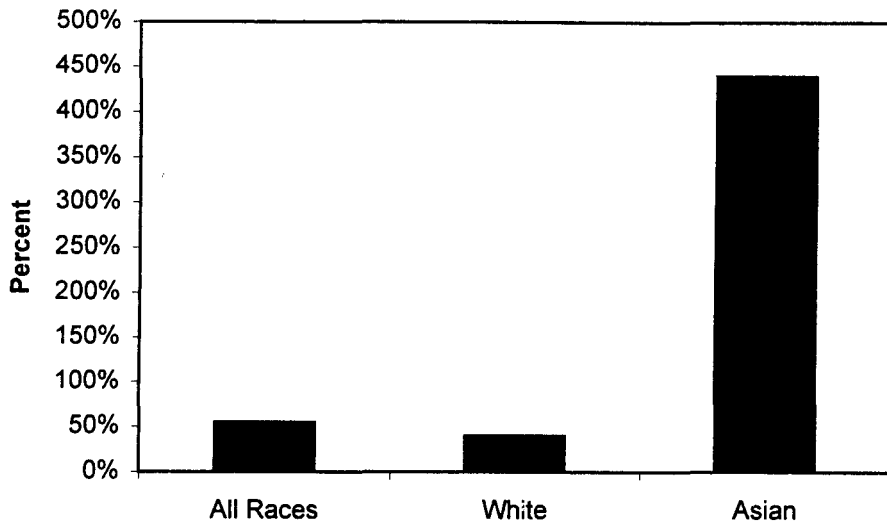
**ASIAN AMERICAN POPULATION GROWTH (1980 TO 1990)**



**Source:** U.S. Bureau of the Census. Press Release CB91-215. Washington, DC: The Bureau, 1991 (Excludes members of the Armed Forces stationed overseas. Population as of April 1980 and 1990).

**Figure 1.2**

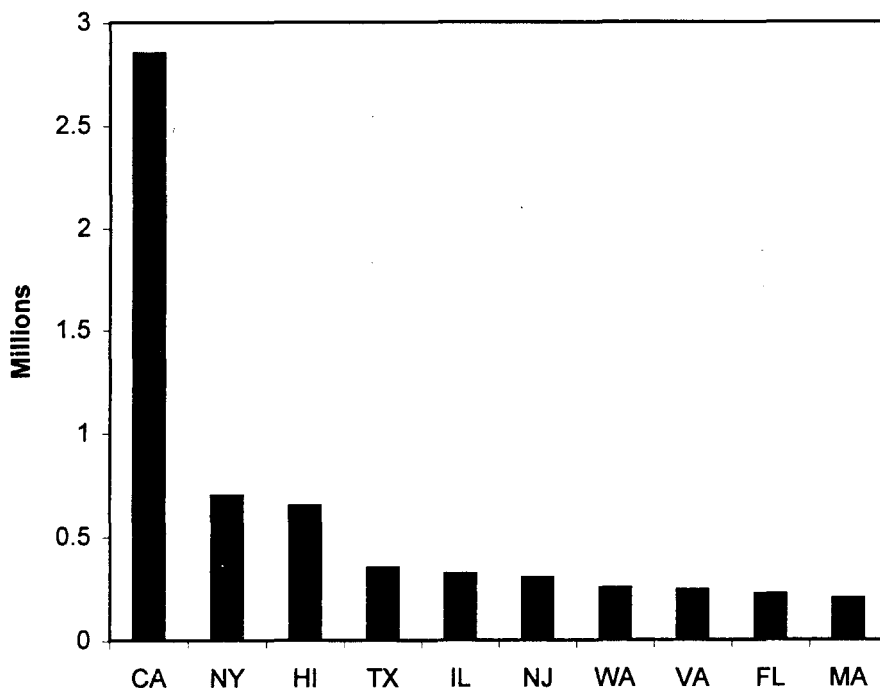
POPULATION CHANGE BY RACE (1990-2050)



**Source:** U.S. Bureau of the Census. *Current Population Reports. P25-1095*, tables 1 and 4. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1993.

**Figure 1.3**

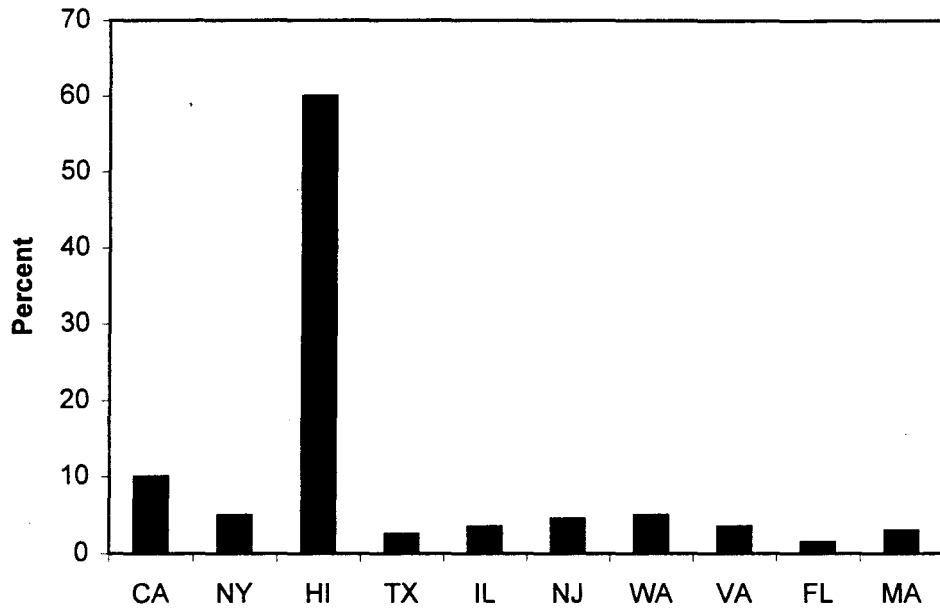
**ASIAN AMERICAN GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION  
TEN STATES WITH THE LARGEST ASIAN AMERICAN POPULATIONS  
IN 1990**



**Source:** U.S. Bureau of the Census. Press Release CB91-215. Washington, DC: The Bureau, 1991. Population as of April 1990.

**Figure 1.4**

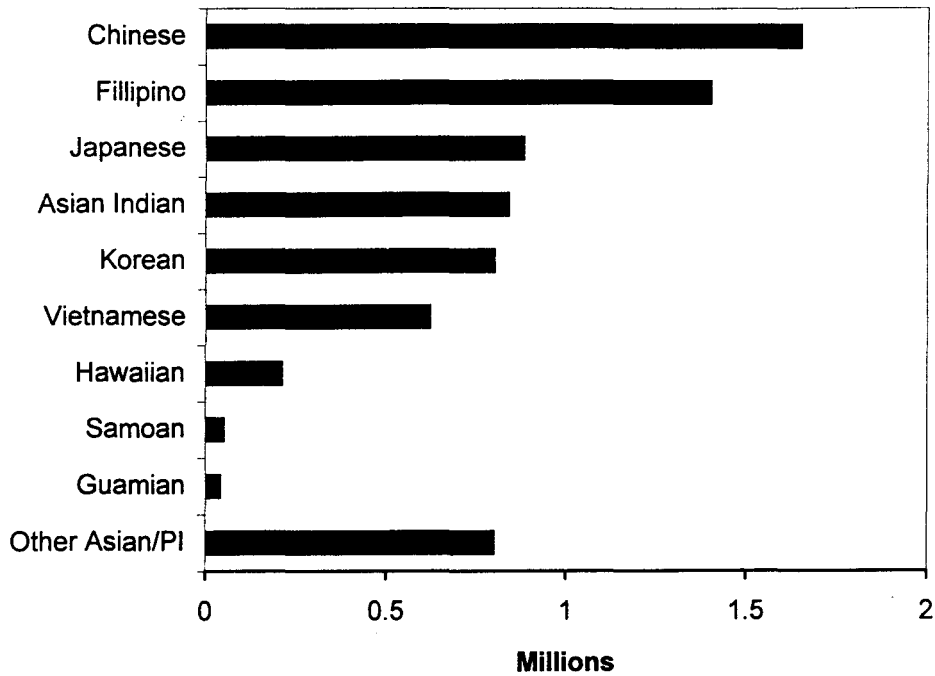
**STATES WITH LARGEST ASIAN POPULATIONS**  
Percentage of State Population in 1990



**Source:** U.S. Bureau of the Census. Press Release CB91-215. Washington, DC: The Bureau, 1991.

**Figure 1.5**

**MAJOR ASIAN/PI POPULATION GROUPS  
1990 U.S. Population Estimates**

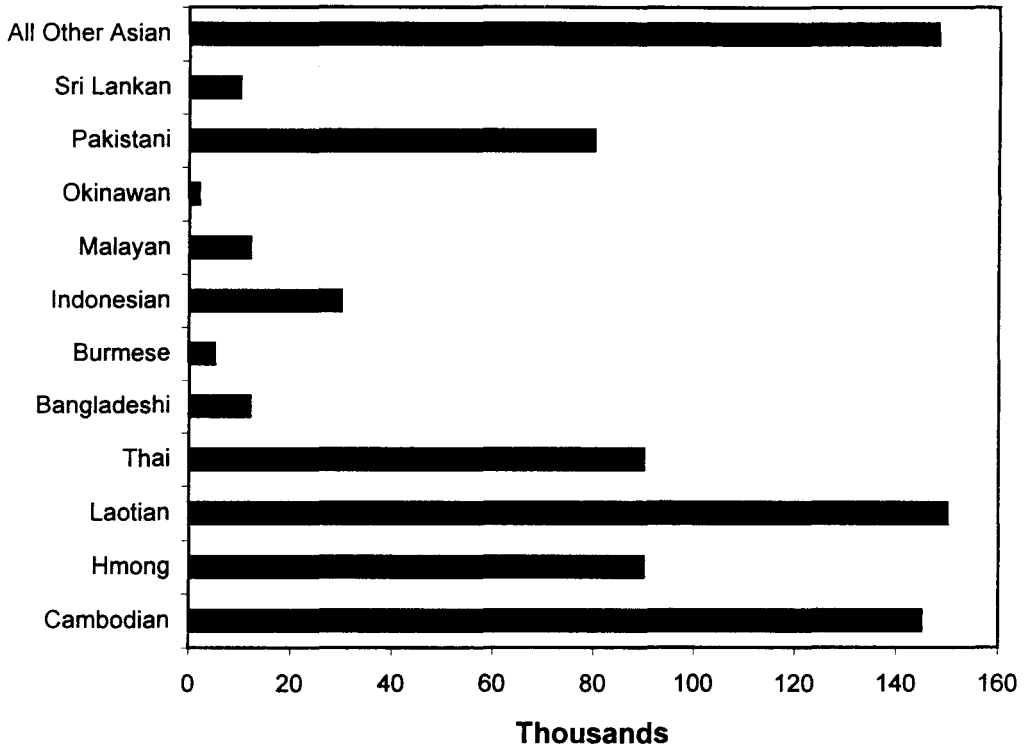


**Source:** U.S. Bureau of the Census. Press Release CB91-215. Washington, DC: The Bureau, 1991.



**Figure 1.6**

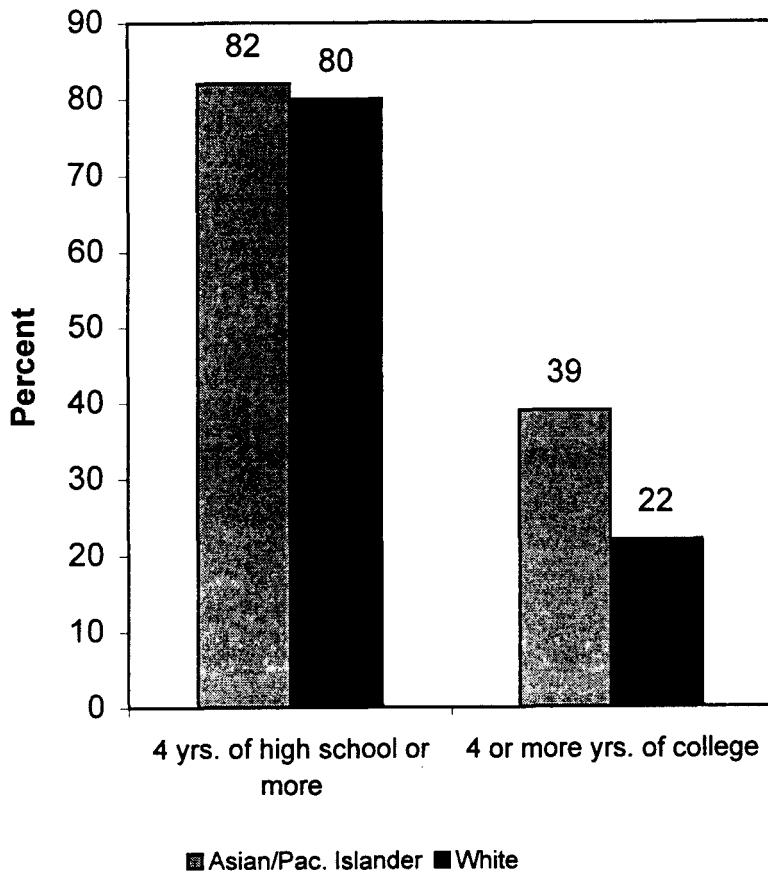
**OTHER ASIAN AMERICAN POPULATION GROUPS  
1990 U.S. Population Estimates**



**Source:** U.S. Bureau of the Census. Press Release CB91-215. Washington, DC: The Bureau, 1991.

**Figure 1.7**

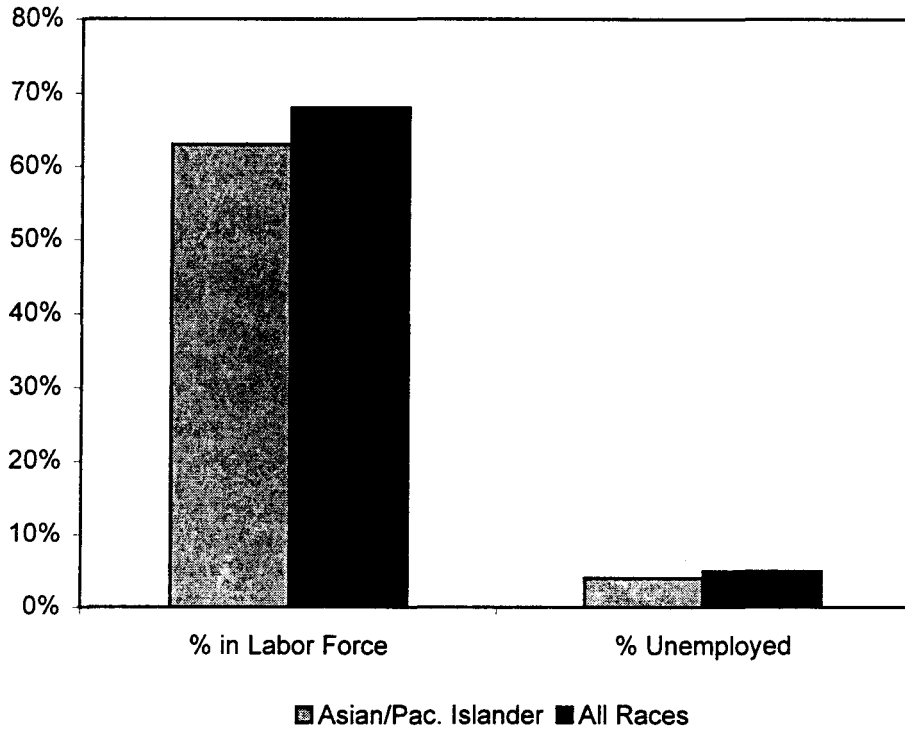
**EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT**  
Percent of Persons 25 Years and Over,  
Asian/PI Compared to White in 1993



**Source:** U.S. Bureau of the Census. *Population Profile of the United States: 1993*. Figure 37, p. 38. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1993.

**Figure 1.8**

**EMPLOYMENT & UNEMPLOYMENT in 1991  
Asian/PI Americans Compared to All Races,  
16 Years or Older**

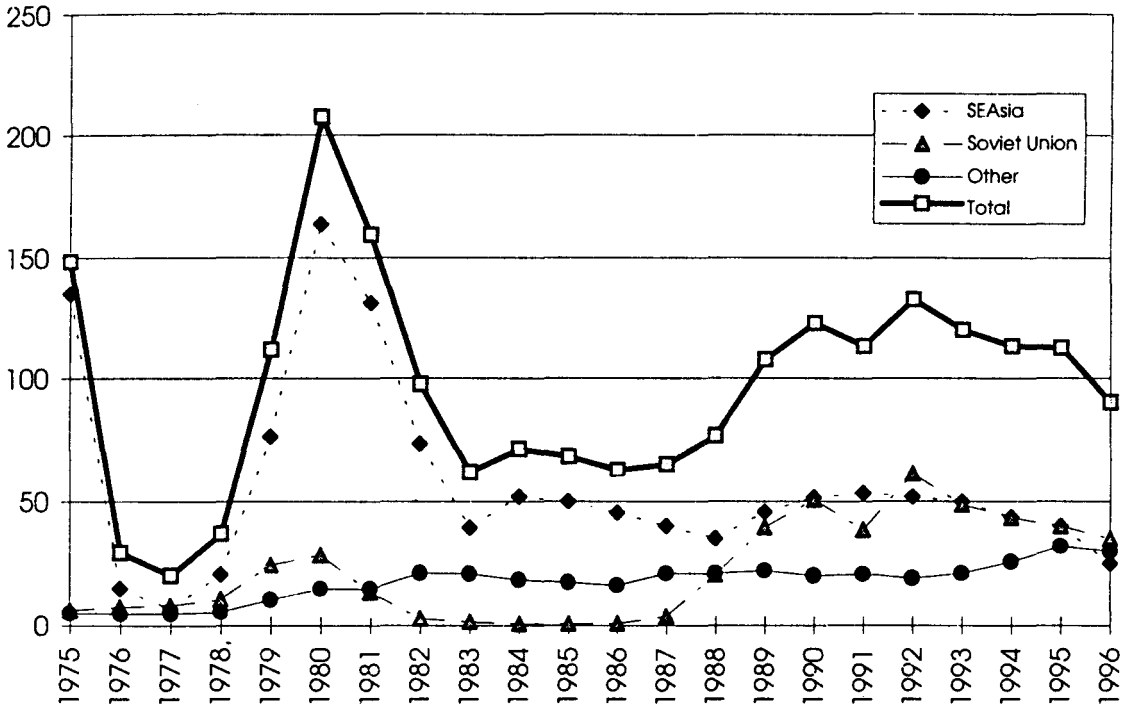


**Source:** U.S. Bureau of the Census. *Current Population Reports*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1991. Series P-20, Nos. 448 and 459, and Series P-80, Nos. 174 and 175.

**Figure 1.9**

**REFUGEE ADMISSIONS (1975 TO 1996)**

Thousands



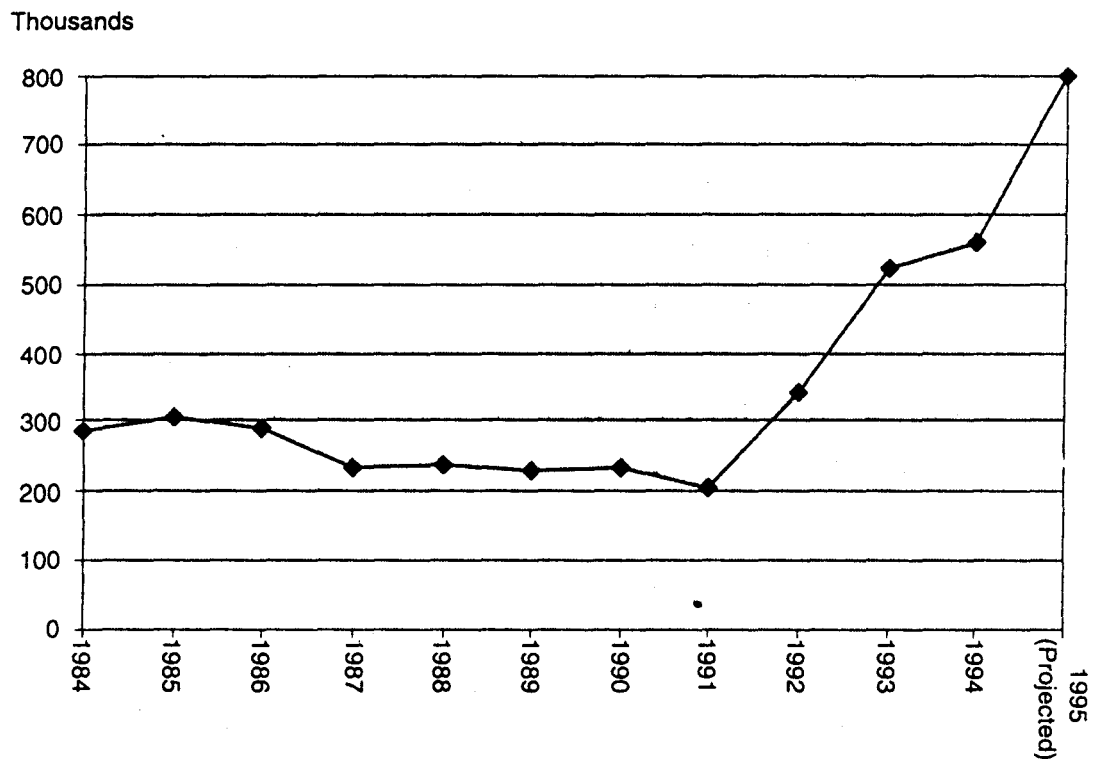
1995 = Approved Ceiling

1996 = Projected Ceiling

**Source:** U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform, 1995. *Legal Immigration: A report to Congress*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

**Figure 1.10**

**NATURALIZATION APPLICATIONS FILED NATIONWIDE (1994)**



**Source:** U.S. Department of Justice, 1994. *INS Statistical Yearbook*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

## CHAPTER II

### **Review of the Literature**

#### Introduction

A more than 50 percent rise in the size of the limited-English-proficient (LEP) student population in the United States took place from 1985 to 1990 (see Tables 2.3, 2.4, 2.5 and 2.6). Current immigration and demographic trends in the United States will continue beyond the year 2000 (see Figures 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3). Such population changes are resulting in a virtual flood of children entering public schools whose needs cannot be met without Bilingual Education and English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction (Krashen, 1996). Our national economy and political security require that we prepare our children with more than one language, using dual language instruction, so they can cope with an interdependent global economy and diplomacy (Lessow-Hurley, 1996). This chapter presents different views on the issue of bilingual education programs and its effectiveness.

## Policy on Bilingual Education

In 1989, the Board of Education of the City of Chicago adopted a Policy on Bilingual Education to ensure that all limited-English-proficient (LEP) students receive the services that the Board recognizes as essential, as well as to comply with state and federal mandates.

In this policy, the Board recognized the need to reaffirm its commitment to bilingual education as an effective vehicle for providing limited-English-proficient students a full measure of access to an equal educational opportunity. The Board also acknowledged the need to clarify the responsibilities for implementing, monitoring, and evaluating bilingual education programs at the school, subdistrict, and Central Service Center levels. This included clarification of parent involvement opportunities for parents of limited-English-proficient students, as well as delineation of procedures for disciplinary action taken against individuals who do not comply with bilingual mandates (Appendix F).

## Chicago School Reform Mandates

The Chicago School Reform Act of 1988 is an additional mandate for bilingual education. It places the responsibility for the success of educational programs for limited-English-proficient (LEP) students directly in the hands of those most likely to understand and find solutions

to local needs. Under school reform, it is the responsibility of the Local School Council (LSC) to determine how services can best be provided to all LEP students enrolled in the school. The Local School Council fulfills its role under the reform law when it makes decisions consistent with federal and state mandates.

Revisions of the Chicago School Reform Act made in 1991 describe the role of the local school Bilingual Advisory Committee and its relationship to the Local School Council in more detail. The revisions establish the Bilingual Advisory Committee as a standing committee of the Local School Council.

Regarding Bilingual Advisory Committee membership, the revisions stipulate that the committee chair and a majority of the committee members be parents of students in the bilingual education program. Parents who serve on the Bilingual Advisory Committee are elected by parents of students in the bilingual education program.

#### State of Illinois Mandates

The Illinois General Assembly in October, 1973, adopted Article 14C-Transitional Bilingual Education (Chapter 122) of the Illinois School Code. This article is commonly referred to as the bilingual education mandate, and it is the basis for bilingual education program implementation in the State of Illinois (Appendix E).



As a result of this mandate, transitional bilingual education programs were established in all Illinois attendance centers with 20 or more students of limited English proficiency from the same language background. Article 14C was revised in September, 1985, to include the following provision for schools with fewer than 20 children of limited English proficiency from the same language background.

When, at the beginning of any school year, there is within an attendance center of a school district, not including children who are enrolled in existing private school systems, twenty or more children of limited English speaking ability in any such language classification, the school district shall establish, for each classification, a program in transitional bilingual education for the children therein. A school district may establish a program in transitional bilingual education with respect to any classification with less than twenty children therein, but said district shall provide a locally determined transitional program of instruction which, based upon the individual student language assessment, provides content area instruction in a language other than English to the extent necessary to ensure that each student can benefit from educational instruction and achieve an early and effective transition into the regular school curriculum (Appendix E).

Title 23 of the Illinois Administrative Code specifies the rules and regulations for implementing bilingual education programs that address the requirements of Article 14C of the School Code. These rules and regulations apply to all school districts in Illinois that enroll any number of limited-English-proficient students.

## Federal Mandates

In April of 1980, the U.S. Department of Justice invited the Board of Education of the City of Chicago to negotiate a settlement in compliance with the rules on school desegregation of the Illinois State Board of Education. Negotiations resulted in the establishment of a Consent Decree on September 24, 1980. The Consent Decree called for the Chicago Board of Education to provide bilingual education.

In October of 1988, the Chicago public schools entered into an agreement with the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, as described in the document entitled *Plan for Implementation of the Provision of Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964*. A section in this document, "Bilingual Education Program," specifically addresses the course of action to be taken by the Chicago public schools relative to its limited-English-proficient students.

Federal and state mandates and the Chicago School Reform Act provide the framework for addressing the needs of the LEP student population.

## Studies with Hispanic Student Components

### Transitional Bilingual Education

This model was formulated in response to federal legislation in the 1960s that called for more effective instruction for children having native languages other than English. The model is based on the belief that the native language should be used as the medium of instruction during the first few years of education so that these children do not fall behind academically while acquiring English. As proficiency in English increases, instruction in the native language decreases. Two or three years of bilingual instruction are considered sufficient for students to acquire enough English to function in the academic disciplines.

The goal of the model is monolingualism in English. The native language of the children is seen as an instrument for the acquisition of English and for academic advancement during the period of transition between the native language and English.

The issue of the length of time bilingual programs should last has been the source of much controversy. On one side is the time-on-task argument, which contends that the more students are exposed to English, the more rapid their acquisition will be. Chavez (1991) states that having Hispanic children taught in Spanish in a society in which

the best jobs go to people who speak, read, and write English hardly empowers Hispanic youngsters. On the other side is Cummins' theory (1979, 1980) of linguistic transfer, which states that only when language learners reach a high level of literacy in their own language can they transfer those literary skills to a second language.

The recent research supports Cummins. Ramirez et al. (1991) in their eight-year study, compared students in three types of programs: English immersion (from kindergarten to third grade); early-exit bilingual programs (from kindergarten to third grade); and late-exit bilingual programs (from kindergarten to sixth grade). According to the results, while all the students in all the programs improved in the areas of measured-math (tested in English), English language arts, and English reading, those in late-exit programs were able to decrease the gap in academic achievement between themselves and the norm population.

In reporting the study, however, Toth (1991) states that the English-only programs seem just as effective as those that provided a great many classes in Spanish. A different view of the Ramirez report was expressed by Cazden (1992), who maintained that the most conservative conclusion to be drawn from the study is that all three programs are equally effective. Cazden draws the further conclusion that the amount of time spent using a second

language can no longer be considered the most important factor in successful English acquisition; students in the immersion program received more instruction in English but did not achieve greater proficiency than students in the bilingual programs. Cazden points to two factors that the study found to be critical in the successful education of minority-language children: better teacher qualification and greater parental involvement. Cazden reaffirms the finding that late-exit programs similar to those in the study are beneficial to the students they serve.

There is considerable debate over the value of the Ramirez report (*Bilingual Research Journal*, 1992). However, the report needs to be viewed from a wider perspective. Even if the students in all the programs showed comparable rates of English acquisition, this does not indicate that all-English instruction is superior to bilingual instruction. The purpose of bilingual education is generally considered to be remediation rather than enrichment, and the Ramirez report reflects this view.

#### Maintenance Bilingual Education

This model is also designed specifically for minority-language children, but the goal is full bilingualism in both the native language and English. Both languages are the media of instruction and themselves subjects of study

throughout elementary and secondary schooling. Supporters point to the need for minority students to acquire and maintain a sense of ethnic identity while learning the skills necessary to participate fully in the wider society. Aside from the Ramirez report, substantial evidence has existed for some time that native-language proficiency, acquired over an extended period of time, is linked to proficiency in the second language and to overall academic achievement (Cummins 1979, 1980; Skutnabb-Kanga and Toukomass, 1976).

The notion of children receiving instruction in two languages and becoming bilingual adults should be welcome in a society that values language learning. However, the notion of minority-language children maintaining their native languages while acquiring English is threatening to a large segment of the population of the United States. Many critics argue that the hidden goal of bilingual education is not bilingualism but monolingualism in the minority language. Porter (1990) states that native-language instruction has become a goal in itself rather than a means to the goal of a better education for limited-English children. Chavez (1991) contends that the real agenda of bilingual educators is to preserve the language and culture of a single ethnic group, Hispanics, and that native-language instruction serves only to reinforce ethnic

identity in the face of the inevitable pressure to assimilate.

There is, however, no evidence that bilingual educators seek to promote minority languages over English; in fact, the first and foremost goal of the National Association of Bilingual Education (NABE) is to ensure that language-minority students have equal opportunities for learning the English language and for succeeding academically (NABE, 1991). Although this organization has a large Hispanic membership, other ethnicities have substantial representation as well; the publication *NABE News* consistently reports on programs for children using a variety of native languages (Krashen, 1996).

According to Porter (1990), the Hispanic leadership wants to maintain bilingual programs, even though bilingual programs have, in the majority of cases, proven unsuccessful. Chavez (1991) further states that bilingual programs exist to promote jobs for an already educated Hispanic elite, who occupy many of the jobs as bilingual teachers and administrators. According to Imhoff (1990), the political demand for bilingual education does not rest upon any demonstration of its efficacy or its desirability for Hispanic students. It finds its source and its appeal in the fact that bilingual education programs in public

schools provide a power base for local and national ethnic organizations.

Those who oppose bilingual education have long ignored any evidence of its success. Porter's efforts to discredit research supporting bilingual education have been shown to be based on biased and false reporting (Cummins, 1991; Baker, 1992a, Dicker, 1992). The fact that Hispanics have been successful in pressing for better education for their children because of the political power they have acquired is neither surprising nor without precedent; it is a natural part of the political process that interest groups fight for what their constituencies need. Finally, it is not unusual to find that bilingual programs employ teachers and administrators of the same ethnic background as their students. According to Kjolseth (1991), the preferred model of bilingual education is one that has been planned and implemented by the local community, which knows best the language, culture, and needs of its students.

#### Dual-Language Program

This education approach is the one that brings minority- and majority-language children together in a way that addresses the needs of both populations. An attempt is made to balance the number of students from each group, and both languages are used, independently and for sustained periods of interaction, as media of instruction. Separate



language arts instruction in each language is also a part of this model. Thus, all students are learning a second, or "foreign," language while developing their own native language. Parents are expected to support the school by encouraging home use of the native language and supporting high academic achievement. Both the school and home foster the goal of full bilingualism for all the children. This education model has attracted growing interest; Christian and Mahrer (1992) were able to identify 76 programs representing 124 schools in 13 states.

What is unique about this approach is that English and the minority language are treated as equals. Besides high levels of proficiency for all students in both languages and high academic achievement, an added benefit of these programs is improved intergroup relations (Gold, 1988). The self-images of students from both groups are enhanced because in class all students find themselves in situations in which they have a linguistic advantage, giving them the opportunity to help those who lack that advantage.

Describing one program in New York City, Morison (1990), notes that the children are very sensitive and develop great compassion for one another. Those who are or become bilingual often assume the role of translator, helping others even without being asked. This opportunity is not limited to the few hours in which a second language

is taught, but is available throughout the school days. All students benefit from increasing their competence in their native and second languages while being instructed in academic subjects. Also, majority-language children acquire more open-minded attitudes toward those outside their usual social sphere.

### Recent Research in Bilingual Education

Major U.S. research was undertaken to describe the problems of limited-focus evaluations of bilingual education as well as to exemplify some recent trends in the field. An eight-year longitudinal study of bilingual education in the U.S. compared Structured English Immersion and Early-Exit and Late-Exit Bilingual Education programs (Ramirez, Yuen and Ramery, 1991). Dual-Language or other forms of "strong" bilingual education were not evaluated. The focus was only on "weak" forms of bilingual education. The programs compared have the same instructional goals: the acquisition of English language skills so that the language-minority child can succeed in an English-only mainstream classroom (Ramirez, Yuen, and Ramery, 1991).

Over 2,300 Spanish-speaking students from 554 kindergarten to 6th grade classrooms in New York, New Jersey, Florida, Texas, and California were studied. Ramirez and Merino (1990) examined the processes of

bilingual education classrooms. The languages of the classrooms were radically different in grades 1 and 2:

- English Immersion used almost 100 percent English language.
- Early-Exit Transitional Bilingual Education used about two-thirds English and one-third Spanish.
- Late-Exit Transitional Bilingual Education moved from three-quarters Spanish in grade 1 to a little over half Spanish in grade 2.

As a generalization, the outcomes of the three types of bilingual education were different. By the end of the 3rd grade, math, English language, and English reading skills were not particularly different among the three programs. By the 6th grade, Late-Exit Transitional Bilingual Education students were performing higher in math, English language, and English reading than students in other programs. Although Spanish-language achievement was measured in the research, these results were not included in the final statistical analyses.

One conclusion reached by Ramirez, Yuen, and Ramery (1991) was that Spanish-speaking students can be provided with substantial amounts of first-language instruction without impeding their acquisition of English language and reading skills. This is evidence to support "strong" forms of bilingual education and the use of the native language as

a teaching medium. The results also showed little difference between Early-Exit and the English Immersion students. Cziko (1992) suggests that the research provides evidence both for and against bilingual education, or rather, against what bilingual education normally is and for what it could be.

### Studies with Vietnamese Student Components

#### Louisiana Study (1995)

Conducted by the Louisiana State University, this study identifies major theoretical perspectives on native-language literacy, including forcible assimilation, reluctant bilingualism, and linguistic pluralism, and reports on a case study of the role of such literacy in the academic achievement of 387 Vietnamese high school students in New Orleans. The study found that literacy in Vietnamese is positively related to identification with the ethnic group and to academic achievement. The study concludes that ethnic language skills contribute to academic achievement via the community-level sociological means of providing access to social capital, as well as via the individual-level psychological means of cognitive transference. It is also revealed that ethnic language skills may not be a hindrance to the social adaptation and upward mobility of young members of an ethnic immigrant group and that these

skills may actually contribute to the goals of mainstream education rather than compete with them.

#### Texas Study (1994)

This document is a series of reports about Texas's refugees and is an analysis of more than 1,000 Vietnamese and Laotian refugee interviews. This study was conducted by the Texas State Department of Human Services. What follows is an examination of the relationships English proficiency and education have with Southeast Asian refugees' income, mammogram screenings, smoking, citizenship, possession of a driver's license, and self-reported quality of life measurements among Southeast Asians living in Houston, Texas. The survey instrument was a questionnaire with approximately 300 variables covering demographics, education, employment, and other factors mentioned above. The interviews were conducted in the refugees' native languages of Vietnamese or Laotian. Interviewers were leaders from the Vietnamese and Laotian communities who were specifically trained in how to conduct the survey without biasing responses. All interviews were pre-approved. Most of the interviews were conducted by telephone, a factor that excluded those not owning a telephone. As participants were required to be at least 18 years of age, the results do not necessarily represent the experiences of younger Southeast

Asian refugees. This study did not reveal any information about bilingual education.

#### California Study (1993)

The social practices described and analyzed in this report are based on a 2-year ethnographic study conducted by the University of California at Berkeley in San Francisco and Sacramento (California) in neighborhoods that are home to five new immigrant groups: (1) Mexicans, (2) Chinese, (3) Vietnamese, (4) Mien, and (5) undocumented refugees from El Salvador. Interviews with more than two dozen state and local officials and 170 ethnographic interviews identified state and local policies and the realities of immigrants' lives. The stories told by the diverse new immigrants reveal subtle differences in each groups' adaptation to the new economic realities that make low-paying jobs harder to find and require that increasing numbers of women work. Among the many policy recommendations is a proposal for the reform of bilingual education programs. Universal access to bilingual education and monitoring and evaluation of existing programs are necessary to ensure that both children and adults have opportunities to learn English without delays in public resources.

#### New York Study (1993)

Auxiliary Services for High Schools, Bilingual Resources and Training Centers (Project ASHS) was a

federally funded project in its third year of operation in 1992-93. It functioned at 22 sites in the five boroughs of New York City, serving 3,972 limited-English-proficient students, an increase of over 600 students from the previous year. The target population included students who were over the traditional high school age and/or had inadequate previous schooling. This study was conducted by the New York City Board of Education.

Day and evening classes in English as a Second Language, native-language arts, sheltered English, and high school equivalency test preparation were held in Spanish, Greek, Haitian, Vietnamese, and Chinese. Participating teachers had the opportunity to attend weekly staff development meetings and workshops on curriculum development and adaptation of instructional approaches. The project met its objectives for English language proficiency, English reading achievement, Spanish reading achievement, and mathematics instruction. It came close to meeting its objectives for promotion and equivalency test referrals. The major recommendation made for program improvement was to increase communication between day and evening staff. There was no information about bilingual education.

## Washington Study (1989)

This study was conducted by the Seattle Public Schools to evaluate the Seattle (Washington) school district's 5-year Bilingual Resource Service Model project. The project aimed to improve bilingual education services for elementary limited-English-proficient students of Chinese, Laotian, Hmong, Mien, Vietnamese, and Cambodian language backgrounds by increasing the instructional coordination between the mainstream classroom and the bilingual center in each school. The focus was on coordination in language arts, English as a Second Language, reading instruction, and mathematics instruction. The project included six sites, with changes taking place over the 5 years. The format involved a half-time bilingual resource teacher to coordinate classroom instructional programs, 10 instructional assistants, curriculum development, project staff training, and involvement of parents and community members in bilingual education.

Results of the evaluation process show the model to have been successfully implemented at all schools. Increased instructional coordination resulted in improved communication among bilingual and mainstream teachers. Also, there was better communication between home and school, and the level of participation by students' parents improved. Participating students showed improved



mathematics achievement; however, they did not demonstrate the expected improvement in reading and language.

### The Effectiveness of Bilingual Education

One inadequacy in bilingual education research is the relative absence of public opinion surveys. We lack evidence of the amount of parental and public support that exists for different forms of bilingual education where bilingual education is a political as well as an educational issue. Parents and children are sometimes asked about their degree of satisfaction with bilingual education during or after the experience. Rarely have the present or future clientele or the general public been asked their opinions on the aims and nature of bilingual education. An exception is Huddy and Sears (1990) who "telephone" interviewed a U.S. national sample of 1,170 in 1973. They found that while the majority tended to be favorable toward bilingual education, a substantial minority (around a quarter of the respondents, depending on the specific question) which included well-informed respondents, opposed bilingual education particularly on the integration issue.

While public opinion surveys are infrequent, expert opinion is more likely to be privately or publicly sought. The United States Committee on Education and Labor asked the General Accounting Office (1987) to conduct a study on whether or not the research evidence on bilingual education

supported the then current government preference for assimilationist transitional bilingual education. The General Accounting Office (1987) decided to conduct a survey of experts on the subject. Ten experts were assembled, mostly professors of education selected from prestigious institutions throughout the United States. Each expert was provided with a set of questions to answer in written form. The experts were asked to compare research findings with central political statements made about such research. The purpose was to verify the veracity of official statements.

In terms of learning English, eight out of the ten experts favored using the native, or heritage, language in the classroom. They believed that progress in the native language aided children in learning English because it strengthened literacy skills, which easily transferred to operating in the second language. As for learning other subjects in the curriculum, six experts supported the use of heritage languages in such teaching. However, it was suggested that learning English was important in making academic progress (General Accounting Office, 1987).

The key question is whether a different group or groups of experts would produce different conclusions. Experts tend to disagree among themselves. This reflects the developing nature of research in this area and the complexity and political nature of what makes a particular

school or program successful or not. One problem is the effect of interacting factors among different types of bilingual programs. For example, the characteristics of the students, their parents and the community all serve to make a program, school, or child more or less successful.

The degree of parental interest and involvement in bilingual education is sometimes seen as an important intervening variable. Also, the status of the heritage language in the community and the country may effect the success of a bilingual education program.

One area in which seven out of the ten experts agreed was that evidence did not exist on the long-term effects of various forms of bilingual education. Seven of the ten firmly rejected the idea that there was support for connecting bilingual education, either positively or negatively, to long-term outcomes. This reveals that research on the effectiveness of bilingual education still carries a low priority. In the experts' survey, four out of ten experts agreed that the literature on language learning did not allow generalizations to be drawn at this stage.

Having considered overviews of research on bilingual education, it is important to note one basic factor. There is a divergence of opinion about the aims of bilingual education as well as of education itself. Differences of viewpoint exist on both the academic and non-academic

outcomes of bilingual schooling. Some may emphasize English language skills; some, attainment throughout the curriculum; some, the importance of second- and even third-language learning. Others may focus on the non-academic outcomes such as moral and social skills, employment, drop-out rates, absenteeism, and self-esteem.

At the social level there are also a variety of perceived aims. For some, pluralism, biculturalism, and multilingualism are desirable outcomes. For others, the assimilation of minority languages and the integration of minorities within mainstream society are the important outcomes. This suggests that a definitive statement as to whether bilingual education can be more or less successful than, for example, mainstream education is impossible due to the variety of underlying values and beliefs that different interest groups have about education and the kind of future desired.

Trueba (1989) sums up the use of effectiveness studies by different interest groups for their own ends: Bilingual education and other educational programs for minority students have become part of a political struggle among opposing groups. Educators and parents have been forced into political camps, and campaign for or against these programs, without a thorough understanding of their instructional attributes and characteristics.

Articles by Carter and Chatfield (1986), Lucas, Henze and Donato (1990), Baker (1990), and Dziko (1992) have suggested that the effectiveness of bilingual education can be discussed from four different perspectives. First, there is effectiveness at the level of the individual child; within the same classroom, children may respond and perform differently. Second, there is effectiveness at the classroom level. Within the same school and type of bilingual education program, classrooms may vary considerably. Third, effectiveness is often analyzed at the school level. What makes some schools more successful than others even when using the same type of bilingual education program and with similar student characteristics? Fourth, there can be aggregations of schools using different types of programs.

It is possible to look at the effectiveness of bilingual education at each and all of these levels and to examine the inter-relationships among these four levels. For example, at the individual level we need to know how bilingual education can be most effective for particular social classes and for children at different levels of "intelligence" or ability. How do children with learning difficulties and specific language disorders fare in bilingual education (Cummins, 1984a). At the classroom level, we need to know what teaching methods and classroom

characteristics create optimally effective bilingual education. At the school level, the characteristics of staffing, the size of groups, and the language composition of the school all need to be taken into account to find out where and when bilingual education is more and less successful.

Apart from individual classroom and school characteristics, the effectiveness of bilingual education must take into account the social, political, and cultural context in which such education is placed. For example, the differences between being in a subtractive or additive context may affect the outcomes of bilingual education. The willingness of teachers to involve parents and a good or bad relationship between the school and its community may be important in the success or failure of bilingual education.

It is also important in bilingual education effectiveness research to examine a wide variety of outcomes. Such outcomes may include examination results, tests of basic skills (e.g. oracy, literacy, numeracy), and competence in any of a broad range of curriculum areas (e.g., science and technology, humanities, mathematics, languages, arts, physical, practical, and theoretical pursuits, skills, and knowledge). Non-cognitive outcomes are also important to examine in an assessment of effectiveness. Such non-cognitive outcomes may include:

attendance at school, attitudes, self-concept and self-esteem, social and emotional adjustment, employment, and moral development.

It becomes clear from a comprehensive consideration of bilingual education results that its effectiveness is not a simple or automatic consequence of using either a child's home language in school or a second. Various home and parental, community, teacher, school, and societal influences act and interact to make bilingual education more or less effective. The relative importance of different ingredients and processes in various school and cultural contexts needs investigation to build a comprehensive and wide-ranging theory of when, where, how, and why bilingual education can be effective.

This approach to studying the effectiveness of bilingual education goes beyond considering only the infrastructure of such programs. It should also factor in why a particular school is generally effective. Important studies on this subject include: Hallinger and Murphey, 1986; Mortimer et al., 1988; Purkey and Smith, 1983; Reynolds, 1985; Smith and Tomlinsin, 1989. For example, Mortimer found that 12 factors were important in making a school effective:

- 1) Purposeful leadership by the head teacher.
- 2) Involvement of the head teacher.

- 3) Involvement of the teachers.
- 4) Consistency among teachers.
- 5) Structured classroom sessions.
- 6) Intellectually challenging teaching.
- 7) A work-centered environment.
- 8) Limited focus within sessions.
- 9) Maximum communication among teachers and pupils.
- 10) Good record keeping.
- 11) Plenty of parental involvement.
- 12) Positive classroom atmosphere.

When the focus changes from school to teacher effectiveness relative to language-minority students, certain elements appear important (Tikunoff, 1983; Garcia, 1991). These include:

- 1) Teachers have high expectations of their students.
- 2) Teachers display a sense of confidence in their ability to be successful with language-minority students.
- 3) Teachers communicate directions clearly, while pacing lessons appropriately, involving students in decisions, monitoring student progress, and providing immediate feedback.
- 4) Teachers use a student's native language for instruction, alternating between languages to ensure clarity and understanding but without translating.



- 5) Teachers integrate aspects of a student's home culture and values into classroom activity to build trust and self-esteem as well as promote cultural diversity and pluralism.
- 6) Teachers promote a curriculum that has coherence, balance, breadth, relevance, progression, and continuity.

One example of research into bilingual education effectiveness is a case study by Lucas, Henzen and Donato (1990) of six schools in California and Arizona. This research revealed eight features seemingly important in promoting the success of language-minority students.

- 1) Value and status were given to the language-minority student's first language and culture. While English literacy was a major goal, native-language skills were celebrated, encouraged inside and outside of the formal curriculum, and flagged as an advantage rather than a liability.
- 2) High expectations of language-minority students were prevalent. Apart from strategies to motivate students and recognize their achievement, individualized support of language-minority students was available. The provision of counseling, cooperation with parents, and hiring language-minority staff in leadership positions

to act as role models were some of the ploys used to raise expectations of success.

- 3) School leaders gave the education of language-minority students a relatively high priority. This included good awareness of curriculum approaches and communication with staff. Strong leadership, the willingness to hire bilingual teachers, and high expectations of students were also part of the repertoire of such leaders.
- 4) Staff development was designed to help all staff members effectively serve language-minority students. For example, teachers were provided with staff-development programs that sensitized them to students' language and cultural backgrounds, increased their knowledge of second language acquisition, and widened their understanding of curriculum approaches in teaching language minority students.
- 5) A variety of courses for language-minority students was offered. Such courses included English as a Second Language as well as courses in heritage languages. Small class sizes (20-25) were created to maximize interaction.
- 6) A counseling program was available. Counselors were able to speak the student's home language, could give

post-secondary opportunity advice, and monitored the success of the language-minority students.

- 7) Parents of language-minority children were encouraged to become involved in their children's education. This included parents' meetings, contact with teachers and counselors, telephone contact, and neighborhood meetings.
- 8) School staff were committed to the empowerment of language-minority students through education. Such commitment was realized through supervising extracurricular activities, participation in community activities, interest in developing their pedagogic skills, and interest in the political process of empowering language-minority students.

#### Public Opinions and Bilingual Education

Opponents of bilingual education maintain that surveys show that the public is against bilingual education. This impression might be a result of the way the question has been asked. One can easily get a nearly 100 percent rejection of bilingual education when the question is biased (Krashen, 1996). Porter (1991) states that many parents are not committed to having the schools maintain the mother tongue if it is at the expense of gaining a sound education and the English-language skills needed for obtaining jobs or pursuing higher education. Similarly, Chavez (1991) reports

that a study by the Educational Testing Service found that the overwhelming majority of Hispanic parents – 78 percent of Mexican Americans and 82 percent of Cubans – opposed teaching the child's native language if it meant less time for teaching English.

Stated in this way, with the clear implication that less time for teaching English means less English language development, very few parents seem to support bilingual education. The question presupposes that bilingual education detracts from English acquisition. Thus it is misleading. Actually, an important and central goal of bilingual education is to promote English language development, and well-organized programs do this effectively (Krashen, 1997).

When respondents are simply asked whether they support bilingual education the degree of support is much greater. The questions about bilingual education probe global support for bilingual education in a variety of ways with a variety of groups in a variety of places. No matter how the question is asked, most respondents support bilingual education (see Table 2.1).

In a series of studies, Shin (Lee and Shin, 1996; Shin and Briggons, 1997; Shin and Kim, 1997; Shin and Krashen, 1997; Shin and Lee, 1997) examined attitudes toward the principles underlying bilingual education. The results are

presented in Table 2.2. It is clear from inspection of the data that there is considerable support for the principles underlying bilingual education. Specifically, Shin found that:

- 1) A substantial number of respondees agree with the idea that the first language can be helpful in providing background knowledge;
- 2) Most agree with the argument that literacy transfers across languages;
- 3) Most support the principles underlying continuing bilingual education.

This data confirms that there is considerable support for bilingual education (Krashen, 1997).

#### The Oquest for Ouality Bilingual Education

One of the larger ironies in U.S. public education is that while the acquisition of a second language and cross-cultural communication skills are extolled as highly desirable, bilingual education generally has met with resistance and negative criticism (Arvizu and Saravia-Shore, 1990). Critics fail to recognize that the goals of foreign-language education, second-language education, and bilingual education are compatible. All three develop second-language skills and cross-cultural competencies among students (Arvizu and Saravia-Shore, 1990).

Minority-language students in bilingual programs bring a language other than English into the classroom. In contrast, students studying a "foreign" language are for the most part English monolinguals. It is a telling contradiction that the study of a foreign language is usually viewed as enrichment of English monolingual students while minority-language students who already speak a "foreign" language and learn English as a second language are viewed as needing remedial education (Arvizu and Saravia-Shore, 1990). For the language-minority student, their language is often seen as a liability to be overcome as quickly as possible rather than a strength to build on for instruction (Rehner and Garcia, 1989).

The goal of bilingual education is twofold. It seeks to have language-minority children achieve competence in English, and it strives to enable them to meet grade promotion and graduation requirements by providing instruction in their native language. Yet an estimated two-thirds of the 3.5 to 5.5 million LEP students enrolled in public schools are not receiving the language assistance they require to succeed in the classroom (LaFontaine, 1987).

There are a number of different programs designed to teach limited-English-proficient students. These include Structured Immersion, English as a Second Language (ESL), Sheltered English, Transitional Bilingual Education, Two-Way

Bilingual Education, and Maintenance Bilingual Education programs. Recent research indicates that high-quality programs, that is, programs that conform to model descriptions of their characteristics, effectively educate limited-English-proficient students (Schmidt, 1991).

A study completed by the U.S. Department of Education followed 2,000 Spanish-speaking elementary school students with limited English skills through three types of model bilingual programs – programs that immersed children in English and changed to mostly English over six years. Findings revealed that children in all three types of programs achieved at a rate equivalent to the general student population and showed higher achievement than other at-risk students. Moreover, significant amounts of instruction in their native language did not impede the children's ability to master English (Schmidt, 1991).

The results also suggest that programs that favor heavy instruction in the native language may be the most effective over the long run. By the end of sixth grade, students enrolled in late-exit programs (i.e., they were eased into instruction in English over six years) appeared to be gaining in math, English-language skills, and English-reading skills faster than the general student population. In contrast, students in early-exit programs appeared to be

losing ground in these areas as compared to the general student population (Schmidt, 1991).

One danger of substantially separate programs to serve limited-English-proficient children is that they can exacerbate student segregation. When bilingual programs are separated from the life of the school community, they can act to isolate their students from the larger school population (Dentzer and Wheelock, 1990). LEP children often experience prejudice and discrimination, and their teachers frequently do not share the same status as teachers in monolingual classrooms (Detzer and Wheelock, 1990).

Two-Way Bilingual Programs (also known as Dual-Language Programs) have not only proved effective (Detzer and Wheelock, 1990) but they have successfully addressed these concerns. The two-way bilingual approach teaches language-minority and language-majority students side by side in the same classroom. The two languages are used alternatively for classroom instruction. In contrast to the remediation approach, two-way bilingual programs view children's native language skills as a strength and a resource to be shared with the other children (Dentzer and Wheelock, 1990).

In short, a review of the literature shows that: 1) bilingual education is the law mandated by federal, State of Illinois, and City of Chicago governments; 2) the majority of bilingual education research studies conducted over the



past two decades used survey research methods or achievement tests; 3) none of the studies, except one in Louisiana, focused on Vietnamese bilingual programs.

Therefore, the investigator of this field study will:

1) conduct a study of Vietnamese-specific bilingual programs; and 2) apply interview research methods with emphasis on the participatory research approach (instead of employing survey research methods or achievement tests as were used widely in studies during the 1970s and 1980s).

## Tables and Figures

### Table 2.1

#### SUPPORT FOR BILINGUAL EDUCATION

<b>Torres, 1988:</b> Support for "Home language as a teaching tool"	
1. Parents on Bilingual School Advisory Committee (n = 41)	Strongly agree or agree = 95.1%
2. Parents not on committee, but with children in bilingual education (n = 106)	Strongly agree or agree = 99%
3. School principals (n = 11)	Strongly agree or agree = 100%
<b>Youssen and Simpkins, 1985:</b> 44 parents of children in Arabic bilingual program	
"I am pleased that my child is in a bilingual program."	Strongly agree + agree = 97%
"Bilingual education should not be a part of the school curriculum"	Strongly disagree + disagree = 55%
"Do you want your child to attend bilingual classes?"	Yes = 95%
<b>Attinasi, 1985:</b> 65 Latinos living in northern Indiana	
"Want children in bilingual education."	Yes = 89%
<b>Aguirre, 1984:</b> 600 parents of children in bilingual programs, 60 bilingual teachers	
"Bilingual education is acceptable in the school because it is the best means for meeting the educational needs of the limited English proficient child."	Agree: Parents = 80% Teachers = 90%
<b>Hosch, 1984:</b> Survey of 283 subjects, from random voter lists, El Paso County, Texas	
"Last year, the state of Texas spent \$31.00 per student enrolled in bilingual education programs. Do you think this should be eliminated/decreased by 1/4/maintained/increased by 2X/increased by 4X?"	Support for maintained or increased funding = 64.3%
<b>Shin and Kim, 1997:</b> 56 Korean parents with children in elementary school	
Would place child in bilingual classroom where both Korean and English are used as a medium of instruction.	Yes = 70%
<b>Shin and Lee, 1996:</b> Hmong parents with children in elementary school	
Would place child in bilingual classroom where both Hmong and English are used as a medium of instruction.	Yes = 60%

**Table 2.2**

**ATTITUDES TOWARD THE PRINCIPLES  
UNDERLYING BILINGUAL EDUCATION**

<b>Rationale for advantages of early bilingual education</b>	<b>Korean Parents</b>	<b>Hispanic Parents</b>	<b>Hmong Parents</b>	<b>Teachers</b>
1. Learning subject matter through the first language helps make subject matter study in English more comprehensible	47%	34% <sup>a</sup>	60%	70%
2. Developing literacy in the first language facilitates literacy development in English	88%	53% <sup>b</sup>	52%	74%
<b>Rationale for advantages of continuing bilingual education</b>				
1. Practical, career-related advantages	97%	75%	86%	85%
2. Superior cognitive development	86%	61%	89%	71%
a. 33% of the sample were "not sure." b. 21% were "not sure."				
Korean parents: <b>Shin and Kim, 1997;</b> n = 256 Hispanic parents: <b>Shin and Gibbons, 1997;</b> n = 150 Hmong parents: <b>Shin and Lee, 1996;</b> n = 100 Teachers: <b>Shin and Krashen, 1996.</b> n = 794				

**Table 2.3**

**CITY SCHOOL ENROLLMENT BY RACE/ETHNICITY (1980 AND 1990)**

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>1980 (%)</b>	<b>1990 (%)</b>	<b>% Change</b>
Black	44.3	41.2	-5.0
White	33.4	25.0	-25.0
Hispanic	18.4	26.5	+45.0
Asian	3.4	5.9	+75.1
Other	0.5	0.5	0

**Source:** Council of the Great City Schools, *National Urban Education Goals: Baseline Indicators, 1990-91*, September 1992.

**Table 2.4****RACE/ETHNICITY OF CHAPTER 1 PARTICIPANTS (1980-1990)**

Race/Ethnicity	1979-1980		1989-1990		% Change
	#	%	#	%	
Total Participants	4,359,711	100.0	4,992,998	100.0	14.5
White (Not Hispanic)	2,324,433	53.3	2,162,953	43.3	-6.9
Black (Not Hispanic)	1,371,304	31.5	1,445,326	28.9	5.4
Hispanic	490,289	11.2	1,140,542	22.8	132.6
Asian	82,396	1.9	159,270	3.2	93.3

**Source:** Westat, Inc., 1992. *A Summary of State Chapter 1 Participation and Achievement Information: 1989-1990* (prepared for the U.S. Department of Education).

**Table 2.5**

**CHILDREN UNDER 18 IN POVERTY BY RACE/ETHNICITY  
(1979 AND 1989)**

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>1979</b>	<b>1989</b>	<b>% Change</b>
Total Children in Poverty	10,377,000	12,590,000	21.3
# White in Poverty Percent of Total	6,193,000 59.7	7,599,000 60.4	22.7
# Black in Poverty Percent of Total	3,833,000 36.9	4,375,000 34.7	14.1
# Hispanic Origin in Poverty Percent of Total	1,535,000 14.8	2,603,000 20.7	69.9
# Asian Origin in Poverty Percent of Total	165,000 1.6	368,000 2.9	123.0

**Source:** U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics*, 1991.

**Table 2.6**

**NUMBER OF LIMITED-ENGLISH PROFICIENT STUDENTS  
AND TOTAL SCHOOL ENROLLMENT  
IN THE UNITED STATES (1985-1991)**

<b>School Year</b>	<b>Total Enrollment</b>	<b>% Change 1985-1990</b>	<b>% LEP</b>	<b>% Change 1985-1990</b>	<b>% LEP</b>
1985-86	39,422,051		1,491,304		3.8
1986-87	39,753,172		1,545,553		3.9
1987-77	40,007,946		1,622,879		4.1
1988-89	40,188,690		1,834,499		4.6
1989-90	40,562,372		1,981,112		4.9
1990-91	41,026,499	4.1	2,263,682	51.8	5.5

**Source:** U.S. Department of Education, *The Condition of Bilingual Education in the Nation: A Report to the Congress and the President*, 1992.

Table 2.7

## TITLE VII BILINGUAL-EDUCATION FUNDING (1980-1993)

Fiscal Year	\$ Appropriation (in Thousands)	% Change from FY 1980	% Change from FY 1980, Adjusted for Inflation	\$ Budget Request (in Thousands)
1980	166,693	--	--	173,600
1981	157,467	-5.7	-13.7	192,000
1982	134,372	-19.5	-32.4	139,970
1983	134,154	-19.7	-37.0	94,534
1984	135,529	-18.8	-39.9	92,034
1985	139,128	-16.7	-42.0	139,245
1986	133,284	-20.2	-46.5	139,265
1987	143,095	-14.3	-45.3	142,951
1988	146,573	-12.2	-46.7	143,095
1989	151,946	-9.0	-47.4	156,573
1990	158,530	-5.1	-47.8	156,113
1991	168,737	1.1	-46.7	175,393
1992	195,407	17.0	-31.3	171,512
1993	196,465	17.7	--	203,645

**Source:** U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics*, 1994.



Figure 2.1

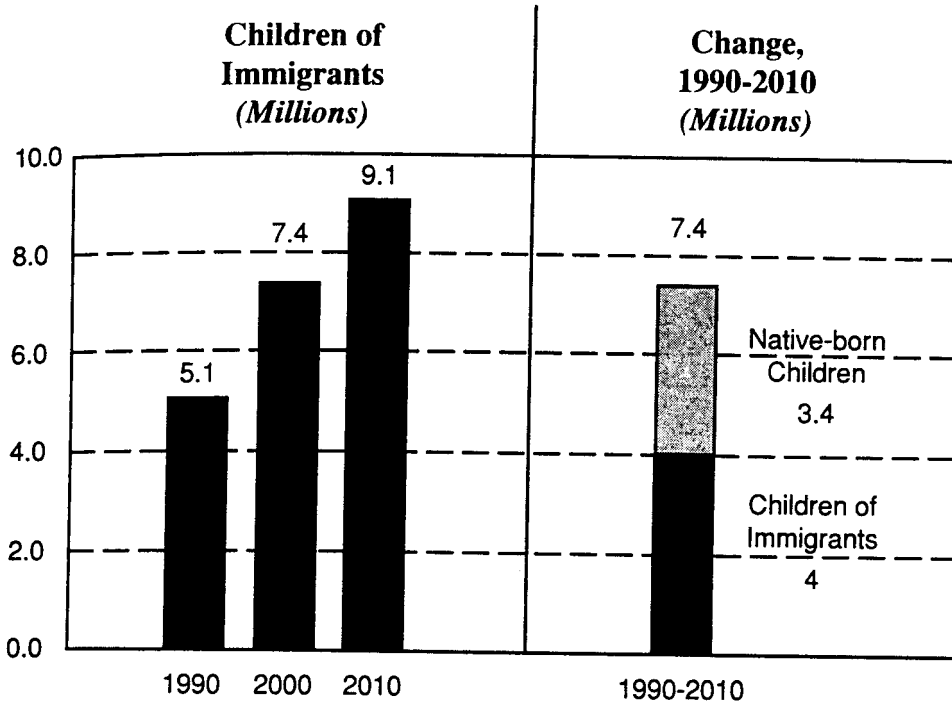
MINORITY SCHOOL-AGE POPULATIONS (1995)



**Source:** U.S. Department of Education, 1995. *Education that works: Action plan for the education of minorities.* Washington, DC: Author.

Figure 2.2

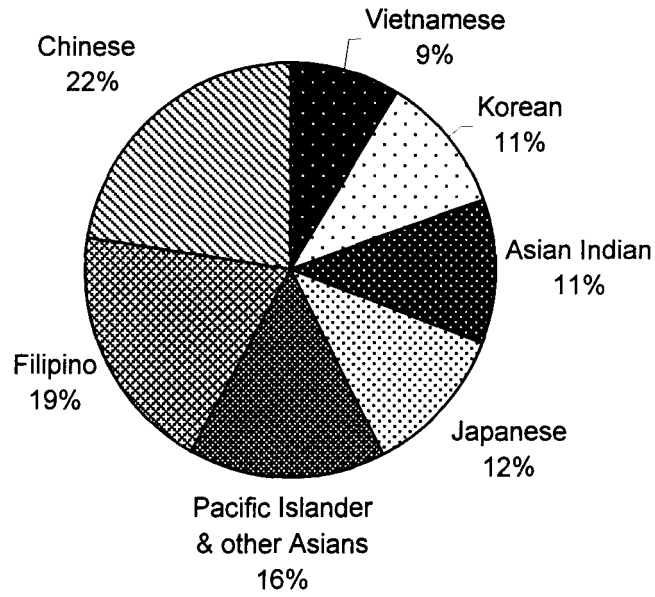
SCHOOL-AGE POPULATION CHANGES (1993)



**Source:** The Urban Institute, 1993. *Educating immigrant children*. Washington, DC: Author.

**Figure 2.3**

PERCENTAGE OF VIETNAMESE STUDENTS IN 1996



**Source:** U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1996.

## CHAPTER III

### **Methodology: Interview Research**

#### Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to indicate the research methodology used in the study, describe the population selected, explain the basis of theory in forming the research questions, and interpret the process of collection and analysis of the data.

#### The Participatory Research Approach

It is generally understood that Vietnamese often prefer to be obliging and provide information they think the researcher expects rather than actually to reflect on the questions and respond with their true thoughts. For example, if this study were conducted through a questionnaire, there would be the possibility of family members consulting with each other, in the absence of the researcher, and providing consensus answers. Thus they would avoid embarrassment, an important concern for them. The resulting data, however, would have little validity.

Therefore, the research approach used in this investigation was participatory. It recognized that empowerment of the participant was through reflective dialogue. This approach avoided a framework of compliance

in which the investigator controlled the time of research while the participants merely responded without reflection. All members in the study were encouraged to become aware of what they could contribute and learn through the research dialogue. The validity of this approach was espoused by Freire (1970, 1973, 1984) and Seidman (1991).

A system of discussion, investigation, and analysis is the basis for participatory research where the process involves the researched as much as the researcher. As a result, an interpersonal relationship, that must be cultivated to succeed, develops out of the interview process (Hall, 1975; Kieffer, 1981; and Oppenheim, 1992).

The alternative to participatory collaboration would place the researcher in a position of control, directing the sequence of thought and action. The participants would likely respond by assuming a passive attitude, without reflecting on their answers, which would indicate that they thought the researcher expected them to reply in conformity with his personal convictions. They might withdraw from true participation if they felt that interviews would not generate original ideas but instead would result in pre-determined conclusions (Cummins, 1987 and 1991, and Seidman, 1991).

The classical alternative, or survey research approach, gets information from separate individuals, but this oversimplifies the exchange because there is usually no

simple or single attitude or decision (Hall, 1975; and Krashen, 1991). Further, in one-time surveys the resulting static picture of reality does not provide the enrichment that is found through reflection, discussion of the issues, and a mutual search for solutions. If we are seeking change, the research process should involve participants "from the formulation of the problem to the discussion of how to seek solution and the interpretation of the finding" (Hall, 1975, p. 29). Research becomes a dialogue over time rather than a static position.

The participatory approach was preferred for this study also because no theories were developed beforehand; rather, in the process, the participants sensed as solutions were sought to problems. Responses in reciprocal situations usually indicate a more reflective atmosphere and a developing understanding of the learning process. Janssen has stated that this liberating effect "provides the individual with the power to know and be aware, so the individual can better decide" (1987, p. 221). Freedom to decide and act are thought to have contributed to more informative responses during the interviews/dialogues conducted in this study.

## Research Participants

Two distinct eras, or waves, of Vietnamese immigrants have entered the United States since 1975. The first era, or wave, consisted of refugees mainly from the Vietnamese armed forces, high-ranking Saigon government officials, and professionals such as physicians, attorneys, and engineers. They belonged to the upper and middle classes, and most of them had good educational backgrounds (Rutledge, 1992). Many had some proficiency in English. They fled Vietnam around the time of the fall of the South Vietnamese government, in 1975.

The second era, or wave, of refugees entered the United States beginning about 1980, and they are still arriving. They represent primarily a less-advantaged socioeconomic class. With rural backgrounds, they have had little education. Most of them were non-English proficient upon arrival and their proficiency continues to be minimal, especially among the older immigrants.

In this study, every effort was made to enlist participants of different backgrounds so that responses during the dialogues could reflect different characteristics and thinking. All subjects in this study were Vietnamese immigrants. Our sample consisted of 10 parents randomly selected from more than 300 parents of students in bilingual programs in the Chicago public secondary schools.

The prospective research participants were contacted in person, by telephone, or through a letter of introduction. All participants received an outline of the purpose and method of conducting the research before the first interview. A sample of the letter, which was modified for each addressee, is included in Appendix A.

### The Basis of Theory in Forming the Interview Questions

#### The Wave Theory

A developing theory applied to refugees suggests that people leaving their native country at different points in time have distinct characteristics (Stein, 1981). The wave theory posits that: 1) the educated and the urban elite are motivated to migrate in the first wave; 2) less-educated emigrants and relatives of the first-wave people leave their countries of origin in the second wave (Walker, 1987).

The differences among waves of immigrants are also reflected in income levels, with 34 percent of first-wave immigrants living below the poverty level, as compared to 80 percent of second-wave refugees or immigrants (Stein, 1981; and Cao, 1995). While immigrants' incomes increase as a function of how long they have lived in the United States, years of education are also a clear determinant of economic success (Walker, 1987).



### The Push and Pull Theory

Traditional theories present immigration as a response to forces such as overpopulation, war, or religious persecution within the sending country. These are called "push" factors because they compel people to leave their homes. Opposite forces are at work in receiving countries: expanding economies, high demand for labor, or availability of opportunities attract immigrants. These are called "pull" factors (Auerback, 1991). It is certainly possible to identify "push" factors in recent migrations: decades of war and oppression in Vietnam and brutal political repression in Haiti "pushed" refugees to risk their lives in search of life, liberty, and learning in the United States (Rutledge, 1992).

### The Price and Try Theory

This theory holds that there is a relationship between the price (in the sense of sacrifice) refugees have to pay for their journey to America and the efforts they make to succeed in their new homeland (Auerbach, 1991). If their emigration is riskier, they tend to try harder as immigrants and become self-sufficient faster in their adopted country. If their voyage is more peaceful, they tend to take it easy or take it for granted in their second country (Cao, 1995). According to this theory, the Vietnamese refugees who suffered a great deal on their way to America would try

harder to make a living and would care more about the education of their children (Rutledge, 1992).

### The Search for Participants

The researcher started making contacts with bilingual programs at Senn Metro High School, Theodore Roosevelt High School, and Roberto Clemente High School. At all three schools Vietnamese students were being taught in Vietnamese, and Vietnamese bilingual programs had begun about 20 years ago and were still functioning.

Many of the contacts gave the researcher early assurances that they would provide assistance with names, addresses, and telephone numbers of parents of Vietnamese students in bilingual programs. In some instances, the researcher made telephone calls and visits to those parents who were willing and ready to participate. Many Vietnamese community organizations also assisted the researcher in his search for participants, in the end producing more than 300 names and addresses of parents of different socioeconomic backgrounds.

Letters of invitation to participate (Appendix A) were sent to these 316 Vietnamese parents of students in bilingual programs, and 109 parents responded by mail or phone, indicating that they would be willing to participate in this study. The researcher called all of these parents to confirm their candidacy and to make initial inquiries about their gender and date of arrival in America.

### The Selection Process of Participants

Ten participants were randomly selected from a pool of 108 parents who agreed to be interviewed by the researcher. (One parent of the 109 respondees had arrived in Chicago in the 1990s via a special program; this name was taken out of the pool.) The selection process followed four steps:

Step 1. First, the researcher identified two groups of parents: 1) Group I included 51 parents who came to Chicago in the 1970s as first-era refugees; 2) Group II included 57 parents who arrived in Chicago in the 1980s as second-era refugees.

Step 2. The researcher then divided each group into two sub-groups based on gender: 1) Group I had 24 fathers and 27 mothers; 2) Group II had 27 fathers and 30 mothers.

Step 3. Names of all fathers in Group I were arranged in alphabetical order, and names of all mothers in Group I were also arranged in alphabetical order. Similarly, names of all fathers in Group II were arranged in alphabetical order, and names of all mothers in Group II were arranged in alphabetical order. Each name was then assigned a number in sequence.

Step 4. Finally, the researcher randomly selected three fathers and two mothers from Group I and two fathers and three mothers from Group II by picking names of parents corresponding with even numbers until ten parents were randomly selected for the interviews.

## Categories of Questions

### **First Interview: Starter Questions Asked for Information about the Family Background**

1. May I know your name and age and how long you have lived in Chicago?
2. Were your children born in Vietnam or the United States?
3. What are the school grade levels of your children in this school year?
4. What is the level of education you completed in Vietnam? In the United States?
5. What was your occupation and income in Vietnam? In the United States?

### **Second Interview: Starter Questions Asked for Information about the Family's Journey to America**

1. Why did you decide to leave your country?
2. Did you come here by boat, by land, or another way? Why did you choose that means?
3. May I know the story of your journey to America?
4. When did you arrive in the United States and what were your first impressions?
5. After living in the United States, what values does your family hold to? Are these values more Vietnamese, more American, or a combination of both?

**Second Interview: Starter Questions Asked for Information  
about the Parent's Opinions of Bilingual Programs**

1. I understand that you have children attending bilingual programs in the Chicago public secondary schools. What are your opinions of these bilingual programs as they affect your children? Do you support or oppose bilingual education? Why?
2. What are your opinions regarding the use of Vietnamese by your children in school and at home?
3. Which bilingual programs do you prefer and why? For example, should all subjects be taught equally in both languages; all taught in English but with an added course in Vietnamese language and culture; all taught in Vietnamese but with an added course in English language and American culture?
4. How do you think bilingual education (or the lack of it) has affected your children's success at school?
5. After living in the United States, what suggestions do you have with regard to bilingual programs that could benefit other Vietnamese children who may be emigrating to the United States in the future?

The Interview Questions

This study was designed to answer six major research questions: 1) what is the parent's family background, including levels of education and income, past experiences in Vietnam, and era of departure from Vietnam? 2) why did

they leave Vietnam and what were their experiences on the journey to America? 3) does the parent support or oppose bilingual programs for his or her children, and why? 4) is there any relationship between the parent's opinions of bilingual programs and the parent's socioeconomic and family background? 5) is there any relationship between the parent's opinions of bilingual programs and his or her experiences during the journey to America? 6) what suggestions do parents have with regard to bilingual programs that could benefit future immigrants?

### Dialogic Interviews

Two interviews were conducted in each of the participants' homes. The first interview was used not only to get acquainted and encourage relaxed participation but also to obtain background data. The second interview was used to obtain substantive information. At both the first and second interviews, the first few minutes were devoted to informal remarks designed to help the participants feel comfortable and to ensure them of the sincerity of the researcher.

During the first and second interviews, the cooperative intent was reiterated. The participants were assured that the children were important for the future of the community and that because the parents were the children's first teachers, dialogue within the family was also important.

The first interview began with questions designed to reveal facts about the family members: individual ages; occupations or those members who were employed; employment and educational backgrounds of the parents in Vietnam; grade levels of the children; and so on. Sample questions are included in Appendix B.

The second interview began with questions designed to reveal facts about their determination to leave Vietnam for the United States. After these facts had been noted, the dialogue led into the experiences of the parents' journey to America. Finally, the focus turned to the exposure of their children to the educational system in the United States: whether their children were favorably accepted by the teachers and other students; the parent's understanding or failure to understand the activities in the classroom; and their thoughts on bilingual programs.

During the second dialogues, the participants were encouraged to recognize problems that the children had had, to reflect on them, and to suggest actions for their solution. The opinions of the participants toward bilingual programs in the Chicago public secondary schools were sought by means of a variety of questions that encouraged participant reflection, as indicated in Appendix D. This interview method encouraged them to respond without undue control on the part of the researcher.

## Collection of Data

The following procedures, with some modifications, were used to collect the data for this study:

### First Interview

1. Mailed the letter of introduction and invitation to participate.
2. Telephoned to confirm the appointment time and date for the first interview.
3. Conducted the first interviews/dialogues.
4. Reviewed the first interviews.
5. Transcribed the first interviews.

### Second Interview

1. Sent copies of transcriptions of the first interview to interviewees, along with a follow-up letter preparing them for the second interview (Appendix C).
2. Telephoned to confirm the appointment time and date for the second interview.
3. Conducted the second interviews/dialogues.
4. Reviewed the second interviews.
5. Transcribed the second interviews.

## Processing and Analysis of the Data

The analysis of the data was an ongoing process within the time frame of the two dialogues and the interim period for reflection. The researcher maintained a continuing analysis so that the questions could be refined from interview to interview to encourage full collaboration by



all participants. It was a method for enriching the evolution of responses, which might reveal a rationale for making changes in the Chicago public school system. The data analysis process for both the first and second interviews followed this order:

1. Read the transcripts carefully to learn the overall mood of the participants and glean a coherent understanding of each individual's story.

2. Reflected on possible thoughts and implications that were not apparent upon first review.

3. Annotated impressions of behaviors of the participants during the dialogues, including late arrival or early departure of some members, interruptions by telephone calls, and so on.

4. Made notes of ideas that had to be clarified or discussed in more detail over the phone.

After each dialogue, but in more detail after the second meeting, the researcher attempted to categorize and analyze participant responses within the following three areas:

1. The family background.
2. The family's journey to America.
3. Parent's opinions of bilingual programs for their children.

Throughout the interview/dialogue process, the researcher continuously gave consideration and thought to

the analysis of the data and the need to refine the areas for discussion and reflection. New questions and thoughts were imposed and old ones deleted to seek meanings that did not appear on the surface but needed to be brought out both for clarification and to make issues and possible solutions more generally understood by the participants.

### Interviewing Techniques

The researcher used the following suggested techniques in conducting the first and second interviews: 1) listening more and talking less than the parent; 2) following up what the parent said; 3) asking questions when the researcher did not understand what the parent really meant; 4) asking to hear more about relevant subjects; 5) following up what the parent said, but not interrupting while the parent talked; 6) keeping the parent focused and asking for concrete details; 7) asking the parent to reconstruct, not to remember; 8) expressing interest in what was being said and taking reflective notes; 9) keeping the interview moving forward (Seidman, 1991).

### Organizing the Data

In order to work with the material generated by the interviews, the researcher: 1) kept track of participants' information and filed it in a safe place; 2) labeled audiotapes of interviews accurately; 3) transcribed interview tapes by entering data into a computer-based word-processing program; 4) reduced the data inductively, not

deductively; 5) shaped the recorded material into forms that can be shared and displayed; 6) organized excerpts from the transcripts into categories; 7) searched for patterns and connections among the excerpts within those categories and for connections among the various categories, themes, and domains.

In short, the researcher used three basic methods to record and share interview data. First, the researcher developed profiles of individual parents/participants and grouped them in categories. Second, the researcher marked individual parent's verbal passages and grouped those passages into categories. Third, the researcher studied the categories for thematic connections within and among them (Oppenheim, 1992).

## CHAPTER IV

### **Findings and Discussions**

#### Introduction

In this chapter, a description of the participants and the interviews, or dialogues, in which they participated will be presented. No two dialogues followed exactly the same pattern, as had been anticipated prior to the implementation of the investigation. It became apparent that each family, its makeup and background, was unique, with varying socioeconomic backgrounds ranging through lower class, middle class, and upper-middle class. Some families departed Vietnam shortly before the fall of the South, and other families left Vietnam long afterward.

Because of the differences in social classes as well as dates of arrival in the United States, the ability to speak English varied among the families: 1) neither parent was comfortable using English; 2) both were fluent and had been proficient before they left Vietnam; 3) one parent was English-proficient and the other was not. These disparities were usually related to their socioeconomic positions before they left Vietnam. In some families, the father was employed in Vietnam in a job that required a knowledge of English, while the wife remained at home as mother and

homemaker and had little reason to learn English or be exposed to it.

The researcher of this study is a Vietnamese who is fluent in both languages. Thus, in our interviews parents were free to speak either Vietnamese or English. In most cases, parents tended to speak both languages. This was an advantage because we could use both languages to clarify any misunderstandings between interviewer and interviewee.

### The Dialogues Described

Interviews were conducted with a total of 10 parents: 5 mothers and 5 fathers. Five families came to Chicago in the 1970s (the first wave of Vietnamese refugees to the U.S.), and 5 families arrived in Illinois in the 1980s (the second era of Vietnamese refugees to the U.S.). Five questions were asked during the first interview and ten questions were entertained during the second interview. The researcher combined the contents of both interviews and summarized all parents' responses and reflections, focusing on three major themes, or domains:

1. The family background
2. The family's journey to America
3. Parents' opinions of bilingual programs for their children.

Excerpts from the first and second dialogues between the researcher and the parents involved in this study are recounted on the following pages.

# **1. THE HOANG FAMILY**

*Interviewee: father*

*Level of education: college*

*Annual income: about \$40,000*

*Time of immigration: first wave*

*Push or pull factor: push*

*Journey to America: hardships*

*Opinions of bilingual programs: opposes elementary but supports secondary bilingual programs*

## **The Family Background**

The first parent who was interviewed by the researcher was Mr. Thuy Hoang, an engineer when in Vietnam. He and his family arrived in Chicago in August, 1975. Mr. Hoang is 50 years of age and the father of five children: Tuan was born in Vietnam, and Lan, Mai, Cuc, and Truc were born in the United States. Tuan graduated from a university and is working as an accountant for a bank; Lan is in grade 12, Mai in grade 11, Cuc in grade 10, and Truc in grade 9. Lan is a bilingual student in a Chicago public secondary school (CPSS). Mai, Cuc, and Truc are in a CPSS regular program. Thuy's wife, Lien Hoang, 45, passed away a year ago due to cancer. Mr. Thuy Hoang is working as a computer programmer for an insurance company in Chicago. The Hoang family resides in the Uptown area of Chicago, where more than 15,000 Vietnamese are now living.

Thuy Hoang was a refugee twice in his life. He left North Vietnam for South Vietnam in September, 1954, when Hanoi fell to the Communists, and 12 years later, on April 30, 1975, when Saigon fell to the North Vietnamese, he left Vietnam for the United States.

## **The Family's Journey to America**

The first and second interviews both took place at Mr. Hoang's house. He welcomed the researcher and we began our interview.

INTERVIEWER You were a refugee twice in your life. Can you share with us your story?

HOANG The Communists took over North Vietnam in 1954 when I was seven. They introduced Communist slogans and doctrines to the Vietnamese that caused troubles and hardships to many families, including mine. The Communists brought a lot of changes and disrupted our society tremendously. Now, more than 40 years later, I still remember what happened to my family in the North under the Communist regime, as well as my experiences in South Vietnam under both the Nationalist and the Communist governments.

INTERVIEWER Tell me something about your first experience as a refugee within Vietnam, the 21 years from 1954 to 1975.

HOANG I had learned from my parents that the success of my family was based upon the hard work of my grandparents. They accumulated a large amount of property and earned much respect from the townspeople. My father followed in my grandparents' footsteps. He had become a teacher

and the president of our village before the takeover by the Communists in 1954.

At that time my parents lived in our grandparents' house, a huge building having more than 100 doors and windows, with my aunts, uncles, and their children. But when the Communists came to power in 1954, all of our material wealth and dignities were stripped from us. In fact, my family was told by the Communists to vacate our home so that the poor could move in. Our family was left homeless.

Others suffered the same deprivations. All those who belonged to the so-called "dia chu," or upper class, were imprisoned; and those of the "phu nong," or middle class, were "reeducated." Only those who belonged to the "ban co nong," or lower class, were free to join the Communist Party and hold key positions in the town. No longer were people allowed to attend church services and religious classes. Instead, people were forced to participate in daily Communist meetings and confessions about what they had done wrong in the past. All children were brainwashed with Communist doctrines through the use of songs, dances, and plays.

INTERVIEWER Is that why your parents decided to leave?

HOANG Yes, that was why my family, along with 45 other refugees, left North Vietnam in September, 1954, to search for freedom in the South. Our group fled by



boat. But before moving very far from shore, we were pursued by Communist soldiers with loudspeakers and guns. We fought with whatever means we had -- though with little success. After one hour of fierce fighting, my father's boat was captured, and because my father was one of the key organizers of our freedom movement, he was immediately imprisoned in North Vietnam.

But some of us escaped, and as soon as we reached international waters off the central part of Vietnam, our remaining boats were rescued by a French naval ship. My family was taken to a transit center in Hai-Phong City, then resettled in a refugee camp in Saigon. Months later two of my brothers died of starvation and illness. Another brother went to live with his uncle in Saigon. My mother and her youngest child moved to an island near Cambodia.

My mother managed to become a businesswoman, importing goods from and to Saigon. She earned a decent living and saved money to pay for her children's education. She returned to Saigon after the fall of Vietnam to see my father, who was allowed by the Communists to go to the South in September, 1975, to visit his family for the first time in 21 years. Two years later, my parents passed away in Saigon as a result of illness.

I lived in Saigon from 1954 to 1975. I found a job preparing food for a dormitory by day, and I went to school at night. I graduated from high school, then from college, and found a teaching job in Saigon. Then the Communists took over South Vietnam in April, 1975, and I had to say "Goodbye Saigon!"

INTERVIEWER How about your second experience as a refugee for more than 20 years, from 1975 to date?

HOANG April 30, 1975, remains the darkest day in Vietnamese history and the darkest day of my life. It was the day when my home town, Saigon, fell to the Communists. On that day, as the American soldiers withdrew, thousands of South Vietnamese citizens clamored to flee their homeland.

I vividly remember escaping with my family from Saigon and being brought to a small boat owned by a friend of mine. My oldest son, Tuan, asked me where we were going. I just looked down and said nothing. Then I saw tears roll down his cheeks. My wife and son cried. I have seldom cried in my life but that day I cried. I cried because I had not seen my father for 21 years due to the partition of Vietnam, and now I had no chance of seeing him at all for the rest of my life. I missed him dearly from the time I was 7 years of age. I continued to cry and hugged my wife and my son tightly, saying nothing.

As our boat drifted out to sea, I did not know where we were going. It was at dawn that I was awakened by lightning, followed by thunderous explosions. Then the rains fell. It was a short storm, but with no roof over us, we were drenched in minutes and shivered in the wind. Morning arrived, drab and gray. Since the water in our canteen was almost spent, we squeezed the water out of our blankets into the canteen, then split a piece of stale bread for breakfast.

INTERVIEWER How were you rescued?

HOANG Several hours later, a U.S. ship came into view, bobbing majestically on the horizon. We had to climb a rope ladder to get on board. The ship brought us to Guam, the Philippines, and then America. At first, we stayed in Ft. Chaffee Camp in Arkansas for processing legal papers and health screening. Later, we moved to Chicago and have lived in this city for more than 20 years.

Recalling all that has happened to me, my family, and my people over the past 40 years, I wish that Communism had never been introduced into Vietnam. It divided my people and my country into units of mistrust and hatred. For the sake of my motherland, I would like to see Vietnam become another Switzerland, where people from different languages and cultural

backgrounds learn to live with each other peacefully; or like Norway, where the poor are treated with dignity, and the distance between the advantaged and the disadvantaged is minimized. I would also like to see Vietnam become like Japan, where family life, team work, and lifetime job guarantees are honored; or like the United States, where human rights and the freedom of individuals are protected and respected.

I dream of a free Vietnam, where everyone has the opportunity to grow and to develop fully as a human being. I do hope my dream will come true. With prayers and God's blessings, I trust that Vietnam will be free, and we will be home happily some day in the near future to rebuild our motherland after decades of destruction.

#### **Parent's Opinions of Bilingual Programs**

INTERVIEWER You have one child in a bilingual program and three others in regular classrooms. What have you decided on the matter?

HOANG Bilingual education is an excellent program for those Vietnamese students who come here with no English background and at ages 14 to 18 or thereabouts. Without bilingual education, it is impossible for them to survive in high school. But those Vietnamese who were born here or arrived here under the age of 13 do not need bilingual education programs because they

learn English very quickly through radio, television, video, and their friends.

The reason why I enrolled one of my children in a bilingual program was because I wanted my son to know as much about Vietnamese language and culture as he did about English language and American culture. My other three younger children chose by themselves not to be in bilingual classes because they speak little Vietnamese and are very fluent in English. I let my children make their own decisions under my guidance, and I support their wishes along the way.

INTERVIEWER Is Vietnamese used in your home?

HOANG I must confess that I have failed to teach all my children to speak Vietnamese because television and computer games occupy most of their leisure time. But I still truly believe that knowing two languages is better than one. Besides, the U.S. needs more people who can speak many languages to communicate with different people in many countries all over the world.

In addition, excellence in education is the key to our nation's future. Those who come here speaking no English should have an opportunity to learn, and bilingual education is one of the tools that helps these children succeed in school. Promoting the mastery of English as well as the development and

maintenance of their native language gives our children a lifelong gift of learning.

## **2. THE DUONG FAMILY**

*Interviewee:* father

*Level of education:* elementary

*Annual income:* about \$81,000

*Time of immigration:* second wave

*Push or pull factor:* pull

*Journey to America:* hardships

*Opinions of bilingual programs:* strongly supports  
bilingual programs

### **The Family Background**

The second parent who was interviewed by the researcher was Mr. Thien Duong. He and his family arrived in Chicago in September, 1983. Mr. Duong is 55 years of age and the father of 16 children. His family also adopted a white Amerasian boy and a black Amerasian girl. This is a family of 20 people. Fourteen of the children are married and work in the four restaurants owned by their parents. Four of the youngest children attend bilingual programs. Mrs. Trang Duong serves as manager of the four Vietnamese restaurants the family owns. The Duong family lives in the Uptown area of Chicago, where they have more access to Vietnamese markets, restaurants, clinics, etc.

Mr. Duong's family left Vietnam by boat in 1983. They faced life and death dangers from the high seas and from piracy. The family has overcome many obstacles and hardships in order to begin a new life in Chicago.

## **The Family's Journey to America**

The first and second interviews were conducted at Mr. Duong's residence in Chicago. The actual interviews took place after our brief informal conversation about the current political situation in Vietnam and the future of Duong's homeland. Seven members of his family were present at the interview.

INTERVIEWER You just told me that your family escaped Vietnam on a small boat, carrying 51 people. Your boat encountered high seas and pirates. Please tell us more about your trip.

DUONG One day in April, 1983, a boatload of 51 men, women, and children fled Vietnam. Several days later, as we crossed the Gulf of Thailand, pirates robbed our vulnerable party and then attacked a second time with grievous consequences. Three women, aged 25, 26, and 30, were abducted. Twelve of the group were clubbed, knifed, and thrown into the sea. Another 12 drowned; our boat sank as the pirates attempted to tow it. All died but our family. It was a miracle, and our family is always very thankful for God's blessings.

INTERVIEWER How could your family survive in such a situation?

DUONG We were a family of 20 people. All of us knew how to swim and had learned special survival techniques on the open sea in case of emergency. We were all fishermen,

you know. When our boat sank, the Thai pirates thought that we had died, and they left us alone. We swam for seven hours to the site of an abandoned American oil refinery. We stayed there for nine days before an American commercial ship came to rescue us. We were brought to a Malaysian refugee camp for processing before we were permitted to go on to the United States.

INTERVIEWER How could your family survive for nine days without water and food?

DUONG As I mentioned earlier, we were all fishermen. We drank when it rained and ate when fish were caught.

INTERVIEWER Were there more refugees like yourselves, facing the same situation?

DUONG As you may already know through reports of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees and via American and Vietnamese newspapers, more than 750,000 Vietnamese have fled their homeland by sea since 1975. An unknown number have died or been kidnaped on the open water, never to be heard from again. These people were attacked by pirates with staggering vehemence and frequency: half of the refugee boats that arrived in Thailand or landed in Malaysia in 1981, 1982, and 1983 had been victimized.

When I was still in the refugee camp, I heard horrible stories about piracy and I saw victims of these criminals. These pirates are not of the



swashbuckling variety; rather, they are common thugs and murderers on the high seas. They hurt people almost casually, with women experiencing the worst violence. In October, 1983, for example, pirates repeatedly raped 23 of 25 Vietnamese girls and women aboard a boat during a two-day attack. Some of the victims were rescued and hospitalized in critical condition.

Hundreds of victims died, having been shot, knifed, beaten, or tortured; some committed suicide under duress. If victims survived the first attack, a second was virtually certain: the average number of attacks per boat almost consistently exceeded two after 1981 and reached more than three in some time periods. Children have told of being beaten or terrorized by pirates wielding hammers and knives. They have watched as their mothers were raped or abducted. Girls as young as six years of age were sexually assaulted. Clearly, young girls and women were victimized in disproportionate measure. Over a period of almost three years, ending in November, 1983, most of nearly 500 persons reported as kidnaped were female. Of that number, fewer than half have been found: abductees were often simply thrown overboard. Some women were sold into prostitution by their captors, but my family was very, very lucky.

## **Parent's Opinions of Bilingual Programs**

INTERVIEWER In our conversation you told me that you had enrolled four of your children in bilingual programs. How did you and your family arrive at that decision?

DUONG As parents, we were invited to attend a number of workshops for parents conducted by the Chicago public schools. There were Vietnamese bilingual teachers at these meetings to interpret what the speakers said from English into Vietnamese. My wife and I learned a great deal from these workshops and decided to enroll our children in bilingual programs.

INTERVIEWER You mentioned that you learned a great deal about bilingual education from these workshops. In your opinion, what is bilingual education?

DUONG Bilingual education is "understandable instruction." In other words, bilingual education is aimed at making instruction understood by the student. My children spoke no English when they arrived here in Chicago. If I had enrolled them in regular classes, they would not have understood anything. It would have been a waste of time for them. But with bilingual classes, my children learned both languages, English and Vietnamese, at the same time. This made learning more meaningful, and it also prevented my children from dropping out of school, joining gangs, selling drugs, or committing criminal acts. My 20-person family did

not die in the Communist forced-labor camps; did not die on the high seas; and did not die from pirate attacks. Why should we die on the streets of America?

INTERVIEWER Has bilingualism had any affect on family life?

DUONG Bilingual education has helped us maintain our Vietnamese language, culture, and family values. This ties our big family together through "understandable" communication. Furthermore, if my children know how to speak Vietnamese and behave in Vietnamese ways, they are easily accepted anywhere in our community. They do not feel ignored or rejected by our people. They have self-esteem and self-confidence.

INTERVIEWER Have you encouraged your children to speak Vietnamese at home?

DUONG Absolutely! We feel extremely comfortable speaking Vietnamese at home. Besides, we are planning to return to Vietnam for a visit. If we speak no Vietnamese, we are very, very shameful! In addition, many American and foreign companies in Vietnam nowadays are in need of workers who can speak fluently in both languages, English and Vietnamese. I hope my four younger children will be among those selected.

### **3. THE NGUYEN FAMILY**

*Interviewee:* mother

*Level of education:* college

*Annual income:* about \$25,000

*Time of immigration:* first wave

*Push or pull factor:* push

*Journey to America:* hardships

*Opinions of bilingual programs:* supports bilingual and multicultural programs on the condition that learning English language is equally important as learning the student's mother tongue

#### **The Family Background**

The third parent interviewed by the researcher was Mrs. Hoa Nguyen. She was born in 1950 in Hanoi, North Vietnam. In 1955, following the partition of Vietnam into North and South, Hoa moved to non-Communist South Vietnam with her family, living in different cities and towns of the Republic of Vietnam. From 1969-73, Hoa worked as an elementary teacher for a Catholic school in Saigon. In 1973 she received a scholarship to study social work and had just graduated when the Communists took over South Vietnam in April, 1975.

Being unable to endure any longer the hardships of the Vietnamese Communist regime, in 1978 Hoa tried to escape Vietnam by boat but failed several times. But in March, 1980, she and her family left Saigon and journeyed through Cambodia by land to the Thailand border. They stayed in four refugee camps before resettling in the United States in October, 1981. On her journey, were her husband, Tam Nguyen, a social worker, and six children, ages 1 to 6.

Upon arrival in the United States, Hoa began to work part time and went to college. Three years later, she completed her M.B.A. and is now working for an American investment firm in a suburban area near Chicago. One of her children is attending a bilingual program in a Chicago public secondary school.

### **The Family's Journey to America**

The first and second interviews took place at Mrs. Nguyen's house in Chicago Uptown on a weekend. The researcher interviewed the mother in the presence of her husband. All of her children listened attentively. Following is our dialogue.

INTERVIEWER I learned from you that you were among the first "land people," not "boat people." What are the differences between the two?

NGUYEN Since the fall of South Vietnam in 1975, hundreds of thousands of refugees have left their homeland seeking freedom. Many of them went by sea, where they endured the hardships of the open sea and pirates. The plight of these "boat people" has already stirred the world.

At the same time, thousands of other refugees fled Vietnam by land, traveling through Cambodia to reach the Thailand border. I was among those people. We suffered tremendously on the way to freedom due to the climate and terrain, wild animals, and man's inhumanity to man. Once we reached the Thai border, our suffering

was not over, as we experienced further ordeals -- physically, emotionally, and mentally.

We left Vietnam on foot, walking through Cambodia to Thailand. We did not want to escape by boat for fear of piracy. We called ourselves "land people" instead of "boat people."

INTERVIEWER During your trip, you mentioned that you faced a great deal of suffering. Can you share with us some of the incidents?

NGUYEN In my opinion, being a refugee by land proved to be one hundred times worse than going by sea. I mean from the moment I left home to the time I was finally resettled in a third country. At the time, nobody outside Vietnam paid any attention to the land refugees. No one acknowledged their movement or shared their sorrows or gave any moral or physical support. The international community at the time remained silent about those refugees who left Vietnam on foot.

INTERVIEWER Share with me stories of your journey, will you?

NGUYEN Our journey to freedom was as follows. Before we reached the Cambodian border, all the way from Saigon to Tay Ninh, it seemed relatively safe. In Tay Ninh we had to split up into small groups and go into Cambodia a few at a time. My children and I were crowded into a tiny shanty in an open field. The kids cried, but what

could I do? It would be dangerous for us if we were heard. For five hours we lay there as I tried to quiet the little ones. The people there gave me a sarong and told me to rub dirt on my face because my skin was too fair.

INTERVIEWER What was the journey through Cambodia like?

NGUYEN It was horrible. At night Cambodian soldiers used guns and brute force to abuse and humiliate the young girls and women right in front of hundreds of refugees. The victims waited, trembling, as their turn came. One night after another. Nighttime was a punishment that each one had to bear.

There was a multitude of suffering endured along the way, on our road to freedom: the checkpoints on the roads through Cambodia; avoiding the Vietcong and Kampuchean soldiers; sleeping in the bushes off the road; drinking fetid water where buffalo had bathed and relieved themselves; running for fear of being exposed; being fearful of being robbed or raped; and facing death constantly. A human being had no more value than an ant in those times. There were swarms of flies and jungle mosquitoes, too, whose sting burned sharper than hot ashes on the skin.

INTERVIEWER Your memory of that time seems to be still vivid.

NGUYEN I shall never forget it. The jungle met us in the border areas, between Vietnam and Cambodia in the beginning, and at the end between Cambodia and Thailand. The most precious thing we carried with us was a bottle of water. At one time or another we had to drink turbid water or water in which buffalo had bathed. Many times we had to drink urine or the dew from the leaves in the jungle.

Along the road, the misery, deprivation, anxiety, and fear of being discovered all tore at our hearts and made our heads pound. No terror can compare with that of being caught or raped. Death itself did not dismay us like those fears.

Khmer Rouge soldiers were as brutal as Thai pirates. After robbing and killing the men, they grabbed the women and girls and gang-raped them. And if any resisted, one round or one slash with a machete put an end to that.

#### **Parent's Opinions of Bilingual Programs**

INTERVIEWER You told me that you had one child enrolled in a bilingual program. How did you and your family reach that decision?

NGUYEN Having been in this country for a number of years, I have observed that one of the problems in United States public education is that while the acquisition of a second language and cross-cultural communication skills



are highly desirable, bilingual education generally has met with negative criticism. I am a teacher and my family supports bilingual education because the goals of foreign-language education and bilingual education are the same. All help develop second-language skills and cross-cultural competencies among students. And that was the reason why my husband and I wanted my daughter to be involved not only in bilingual programs but also in multicultural classes.

INTERVIEWER In your opinion, what are the goals of bilingual education that your child hopefully will achieve?

NGUYEN As I understand it, the goals of bilingual education are twofold. It seeks to have language-minority children achieve competency in English, and it strives to enable them to meet grade promotion and graduation requirements by providing instruction in their native language. Significant amounts of instruction in my child's native language did not impede her ability to master English. Bilingual as well as multicultural programs helped, not hindered, my child's education.

#### **4. THE TRAN FAMILY**

*Interviewee:* mother

*Level of education:* college

*Annual income:* about \$35,000

*Time of immigration:* first wave

*Push or pull factor:* push

*Journey to America:* hardships

*Opinions of bilingual programs:* bilingual programs are good for some but not for all immigrant students

#### **The Family Background**

The fourth interview was conducted at Mrs. Xuan Tran's house. She is 63 years old and the mother of nine children, all boys born in Vietnam and all living. Her husband, Mr. Thinh Tran, 69, also lives with his family in Chicago. As emigrants, the Trans had great difficulty escaping from Vietnam in 1975 because they had become separated from their children. However, seven of their children did manage to escape on their own, and the parents finally came to the United States in 1979 with their two youngest sons.

The oldest child, Khoa, 40, was already in the United States, having come here in 1974 as a foreign exchange student. Today, four children live in different states, two live in Paris, and the two youngest sons, Hung, 19, and Cuong, 18, live in Chicago. Cuong Tran attends a bilingual program in a Chicago public secondary school.

Both parents spoke French and English in Vietnam. They attended public schools and went to college there. Because Vietnam, until the 1940s, was a French colony, all subjects in the schools they attended were taught in French. English was taught for one hour per week in the high schools.

Mrs. Tran had her own import-export business in Vietnam, while Mr. Tran was a contractor doing maintenance work for USAID (United States Agency for International Development). After their arrival in the United States, they owned a grocery store for several years, and then they bought a restaurant. Both have been sold, and Mr. Tran is now retired but still active in community organizations. Mrs. Tran presently works as a consultant for a manufacturing firm.

### **The Family's Journey to America**

The first and second interviews both took place at Mrs. Tran's house. She welcomed the researcher and we began our interview.

INTERVIEWER Why did you decide to leave your country?

TRAN I left Vietnam for the U.S. because my family and I did not like the Communist regime. We escaped Vietnam by boat in 1975 and, fortunately, were soon rescued at sea and brought to Palawan refugee camp in the Philippines. We had to stay in the camp for two years before the U.S. delegation approved our request to reunite with my son in the United States.

INTERVIEWER Why did you choose Chicago?

TRAN My husband and I decided to live in Chicago because my son Khoa had come to Chicago in 1974 on a student visa. He now works as executive director of a social service agency for Southeast Asian refugees. His younger

brothers Khai, 26, now an accountant, and Khoi, 24, now a teacher, arrived in Chicago from Paris in 1979. They, too, had left Vietnam by boat and were picked up by a French merchant ship. They lived in France for a while before their brother Khoa sponsored them to Chicago.

INTERVIEWER What was your first impression of Chicago?

TRAN It was cold and lonely. We arrived in Chicago around Christmas of 1979 and rented a small apartment in the Uptown neighborhood. Because of cold weather, everyone wanted to stay in their own homes, so we felt rather isolated. Chicago is a mixed city in terms of races. That scared us, too. We were afraid to go out alone and had no car to visit our friends. My son had a car, but he used it to go to work. It was good that he had a job and he worked very hard, but he had very little time left for his parents and brothers who were newly arrived in Chicago. The only time we spent together was watching TV. But TV programs also scared us to death because we saw and heard stories of drug abuse, gang violence, rapes, and crimes.

INTERVIEWER Why did you still want to stay in Chicago?

TRAN We left Vietnam in search of freedom and opportunity. Now we had both and were determined to re-start our lives from zero. We borrowed money from our relatives and friends and opened a small grocery store. We

survived day by day, month by month, and year by year. We all took turns going to school to learn English. Our children went to public schools. And finally we saw a light at the end of the tunnel.

### **Parent's Opinions of Bilingual Programs**

INTERVIEWER I understand that your youngest child is attending a bilingual program. What is your opinion of this program?

TRAN My youngest son knew no English when he arrived in Chicago. But soon, if a person spoke to him slowly, he could understand some of what was being said. So I enrolled him in a so-called "pull-out" bilingual program. He had no classes conducted in Vietnamese, but he took ESL courses. He took all the regular courses taught in English. My son depended upon help from his understanding teachers and classmates. Also, he used television to help him learn English, and today he encourages new arrivals to give this instrument considerable attention.

He feels that English is more "scientific" and better suited for life here in the United States. English idioms are more difficult and important than idioms in Vietnamese, and they are easier to learn on television. He and his brothers often speak among themselves in English.

However, we all speak Vietnamese in the family group, even though we also speak fluent English. Our children feel, as we do, that retaining our culture is easier when we use our native language. [Note: There was no indication that the parents had unduly influenced the sons' use of the Vietnamese language at home.]

INTERVIEWER What are your opinions regarding the use or non-use of Vietnamese by your child in school?

TRAN Although my son struggled in his first months in school because of his limited ability in English, we do not believe that teaching classes in Vietnamese was necessary for him or desirable. When Vietnamese is used, my son told me, students tend to think in Vietnamese and continue to discourse in that language with other students and the teacher. People are normally reluctant to change and adapt to a new environment. They must be forced to break out of their shell. My son affirmed that he did not need Vietnamese in classes.

INTERVIEWER So there is no need for bilingual programs?

TRAN Oh, no! Don't misquote me on that. For newly arrived immigrants, bilingual programs may be necessary. Bilingual education would be helpful in teaching abstract concepts, especially for those students who have gaps in their education. In striving to learn

English, and you must go beyond the abstract, bilingual programs can be a help. Bilingual programs may be quite useful to some people but not to all; it can be a stepping stone.

Our family believes that the challenge to learn English quickly can be met by high achievers, but we also recognize that there are differences among individuals and their circumstances.

Our family did not need bilingual programs. Our children did well in their English-taught classes and acquired fluent English by virtue of their personal efforts, which included relying on their teachers and classmates for assistance and cultivating a wide variety of friendships with all the nationalities represented in their daily contacts.

#### **5. THE VUONG FAMILY**

*Interviewee: father*

*Level of education: elementary*

*Annual income: about \$10,000*

*Time of immigration: second wave*

*Push or pull factor: push*

*Journey to America: hardships*

*Opinions of bilingual programs: supports bilingual programs*

#### **The Family Background**

The researcher learned upon arrival at their residence that Tuan Vuong, 56, and Trang Vuong, 52, spoke little English. However, their children have acquired an excellent command of the language.

The father, Tuan Vuong, was a bus driver in Hanoi and, later, in Saigon. After he arrived in Chicago as a "second wave" immigrant in 1987, he worked for a jewelry company for a while but is now retired and acts as a janitor at a local church. He went through the third grade in Vietnam, as did his wife Trang Vuong, who has never been employed outside the home. Neither of them studied English before coming to the United States. After arriving in Chicago in 1987, both parents attended ESL classes four hours a day, five days a week.

Their older son, Thuan, had completed nine years of schooling in Vietnam and had studied French from grade eight but had studied no English. In Chicago he completed high school and went on to college, graduating with a degree in computer science.

Hanh, the daughter, went through the seventh grade in Vietnam and studied some French there. Although she did not know English, the first Chicago school she attended placed her in sixth grade, based on her age. As a consequence, she found school easy since her studies in Vietnam were more advanced. She is presently a senior at a Catholic university in Chicago and plans to earn a license as a registered nurse.

The younger son, Phuong, knew no English. He still attends a bilingual program in high school.



## **The Family's Journey to America**

INTERVIEWER Mr. Vuong, why did you decide to leave your country?

VUONG Life in Vietnam under the Communist regime was miserable. We had no food to eat, no clothes to wear, and no place to sleep at night. We had no choice but to leave Vietnam. Our survival instinct pushed us to head elsewhere.

INTERVIEWER How did you get here?

VUONG It is a long story. We escaped 11 times and were caught 9 times. Twice we missed the boat. Once, when we were caught by Communist soldiers, we were arrested, tortured, and put in jail for a year with only one cup of water and one bowl of rice a day. We were in darkness and we were never allowed to go out of our cells to see the light. But these sufferings never stopped our desire to escape to freedom.

INTERVIEWER Tell me something about your final escape.

VUONG We left Ca-Mau near Phu-Quoc Island at two o'clock in the morning. All the Communist soldiers were sleeping. Our boat moved slowly and quietly. We pretended to be fishermen beginning our daily routine. After two days on the open sea, high winds came and our boat sank. We tried to swim, but only 9 out of 29 escapees survived.

Among the dead were two of my children. An American ship passed by and saw us. We cried for help and were kindly rescued and brought to Sungei Besi refugee camp in Malaysia.

INTERVIEWER How long did you stay at the camp?

VUONG We had to stay there for three years because so many refugees who came before us had to be processed first. It was extremely hot but the activities in the camp helped time pass by quickly. We had ESL (English as a Second Language) classes, GED (General Education Development) classes, and CO (Cultural Orientation) classes. These occupied our days in the camp.

#### **Parent's Opinions of Bilingual Programs**

INTERVIEWER I understand that you have a child attending a bilingual program. What is your opinion of this program for your child?

VUONG At the high school my son is attending, all the immigrant children have ESL classes. My son is taught English spelling and grammar. In high schools, ESL covers all areas of learning across the curriculum. ESL is taught within the study of mathematics, science, social sciences, and so on. My child depends upon the teachers' special help, which he actively seeks.

Of course, some teachers only come to school to fill in the required time without providing much help, but other teachers are more conscientious. He mostly learned English from friends he had made at school and in our neighborhood.

INTERVIEWER Does your child feel comfortable with his program?

VUONG Yes. I assume so because I hear no complaints from him. He has a lot of homework to do at night. I know very little English, so I am not very helpful to him.

INTERVIEWER Do you hear anything about his ESL classmates?

VUONG Yes. Sometimes he tells me that students of different nationalities learn English differently. For example, some students learn new words and phrases more quickly than the Vietnamese children, but they tend to forget them in a few days while the Vietnamese students who once learn something do not forget it. Vietnamese students tend to try harder because their parents always tell them: "We risked our lives to bring you here, and you must work to be a success. You must learn English and get a degree; then, everybody will look up to you."

INTERVIEWER What are your opinions regarding the use of Vietnamese at home?

VUONG In this home, Vietnamese is almost always spoken because we, the parents, do not know English. If we did speak English, we would speak it to them because we want our children to learn English as quickly as possible.

My children always speak Vietnamese with their parents because they want to show respect toward us. Confucianism focuses on respect for the family and respect for learning. My children prefer to speak Vietnamese at home for greater ease in communication with their parents and not because they don't wish to improve their English.

INTERVIEWER Do you support bilingual programs for your child?

VUONG Of course. We, the parents, are happy with the success of our children in learning English and other subjects in school. I believe that my son has had excellent help in school.

## **6. THE DANG FAMILY**

*Interviewee: father*

*Level of education: high school*

*Annual income: about \$15,000*

*Time of immigration: second wave*

*Push or pull factor: push*

*Journey to America: hardships*

*Opinions of bilingual programs: supports a  
modified bilingual program*

### **The Family Background**

Our sixth interview took place at Mr. and Mrs. Dang's house, which is located in the Logan Square neighborhood of Chicago, Illinois.

Mr. Hang Dang, 62, and Mrs. Phuong Dang, 46, both finished high school in Vietnam. In Vietnam, he was a businessman, and he is presently employed as a salesman. Phuong has always been a housewife. The family arrived in Chicago together in 1983 as "second wave" immigrants. Although both parents have difficulty with English, their children, all born in Vietnam, are fluent in the language.

Daughter Tuyet, 22, graduated with a B.A. degree in business administration and presently works for the Social Security Administration, processing supplemental claims for clients who do not know English. Daughters Huong, 17, and Hoa, 18, are in high school bilingual programs.

## **The Family's Journey to America**

INTERVIEWER Why did you decide to leave your country?

DANG My wife is a Chinese and I am a Vietnamese. When China attacked the northern border of Vietnam, the Communist government in Vietnam considered our family their enemy and called my wife a traitor. 2The Communist government said that Vietnam was not my family's land, and therefore we had to leave. We could go either to the north, they meant mainland China, or to the east, they meant the U.S.

INTERVIEWER Did you come here by boat, by land, or another way?

DANG We came here on a huge ship, carrying hundreds of people packed closely together. The ship moved very slowly and stopped frequently. It was no way to transport human beings.

INTERVIEWER May I know more about your trip to America?

DANG After 11 days at sea, our ship stopped moving. We had no food, no water, nothing. People waited to die and be thrown overboard. I did not know when my turn would come to die and be thrown away.

INTERVIEWER Why did people die? Did anyone come to the rescue?

DANG People died because of sickness, hunger, thirst, and exhaustion. The ones who died first were children. At least 90 children died on my ship. Two were my own children.

There were many ships passing by, but they did not care to rescue us. They knew that if they helped us, they would be in trouble because the country that the ship belonged to would have to resettle us.

But finally an American navy ship came by. The navy ship received our S.O.S. signals and asked permission from their base to rescue us. Partly because of the kindness of the U.S. government and partly because of international laws, we were finally rescued and brought to Hong Kong refugee camps.

INTERVIEWER Were you now safe?

DANG Yes. We were now safe because we were under the protection of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees. We were now safe because we were rescued by an American ship and therefore were allowed to resettle in the United States of America.

INTERVIEWER How long did you stay in Hong Kong?

DANG We had to stay in Hong Kong for six months to reestablish our identification and pass security screening and health checkups. We also needed someone in the U.S. who was willing to sponsor our family. A

friend of mine living in Chicago was kind enough to complete our paperwork for us, and she found a voluntary agency that agreed to process the documents. That's why we are now in Chicago.

### **Parent's Opinions of Bilingual Programs**

INTERVIEWER I understand that you have children attending bilingual programs in a Chicago public secondary school. What are your opinions of the programs?

DANG I enrolled my children in bilingual programs because they spoke no English upon their arrival in Chicago. When the children did not seem to understand what was being said in English, the bilingual teacher would recognize this and explain terms to them in Vietnamese or Cantonese. Other teachers they had were helpful as well.

My children thought that the first months of school were very scary, but they soon found it exciting.

I believe that whenever a teacher really teaches, the children can learn something. My children told me that for them education is "number one"...before anything else.

INTERVIEWER What is your opinion regarding the use of Vietnamese at home?



DANG My children speak Vietnamese at home all the time.

Even though we parents may be poor in English, our children are not required to speak Vietnamese at home. For me it is a voluntary matter. The children feel free to speak whatever language they are comfortable with.

The decision to speak in Vietnamese at home was based solely on convenience. However, my children recalled that the English teachers said, "When you go home, you should speak English, practice English." But our family preferred to follow our instincts.

INTERVIEWER How do your children feel about their bilingual programs?

DANG They think English is the universal language, and they believe it is important for them to learn English if they are to succeed in this country. But they found it helpful to have bilingual teachers who could translate new English terms or concepts into Vietnamese to help them learn the meaning of new words clearly.

INTERVIEWER You are a concerned father. What suggestion or suggestions do you have with regard to bilingual programs that could benefit other Vietnamese children who may be emigrating to the United States in the future?

DANG Although my children were satisfied with the way they began their studies in the United States -- in English but with bilingual teachers who could explain terms in both Vietnamese and English -- I would like to suggest that in the beginning the familiar language should be used but supplemented with ESL classes. Gradually, more English and less Vietnamese would be used until in one or two years they would study in English only. In other words, I advocate a modified transitional method. I believe that the primary language should be used the first year and then, slowly, conduct more classes in English.

#### **7. THE LY FAMILY**

*Interviewee: father*

*Level of education: college*

*Annual income: about \$40,000*

*Time of immigration: first wave*

*Push or pull factor: push*

*Journey to America: hardships*

*Opinions of bilingual programs: neutral on bilingual programs but supports bicultural programs*

#### **The Family Background**

Mr. Anh Ly, 55, and Mrs. Chau Ly, 45, arrived in Chicago with their youngest son, Hai, then 2 years of age, in 1979. Hai Ly is now a bilingual student in a Chicago public secondary school.

Mr. Anh Ly is a Vietnamese but was born in Hong Kong. His parents brought him back to Vietnam when he was 9 years

of age. He finished his college education in Vietnam and became an importer and exporter of goods, trading between Hong Kong and Vietnam.

Anh Ly is fluent in English because of the demands of his profession. His wife completed high school in Vietnam and stays home to care for the family. They are obviously well-to-do. Their two-story home, which is located in the Rogers Park neighborhood of Chicago, contains many costly oriental furnishings.

Their youngest son, Hai Ly, is now in the twelfth grade and is a bilingual student. He has always been in bilingual programs because his parents want him to learn Asian culture and because he has Asian friends. But his parents have also maintained that he must learn English as well as possible. His teachers, understanding his parents' intention, have been sympathetic and helpful. Hai found high school difficult at first, but he worked hard. He got good grades for the first semester of the 1995-96 school year and was on the school honor roll.

### **The Family's Journey to America**

INTERVIEWER Why did you decide to leave your country?

LY As you may already know, communism is the enemy of capitalism. I am an importer and exporter, which means I am a capitalist. I always knew the Communists never accepted me. So my wife, my children, and I decided to leave Vietnam by boat.

INTERVIEWER When did you leave Vietnam?

LY We left Saigon on April 30, 1975, on a small boat. It still remains the saddest day of my life. As you know, thousands of South Vietnamese fled their homeland that day. We call it the darkest day in the history of Vietnam.

INTERVIEWER Did your trip go smoothly?

LY Oh, my God! It was terrible. I thought my whole family had disappeared at sea that day.

INTERVIEWER Why?

LY As our boat drifted into the sea, we did not know where we were going. Our boat was too small to deal with the dangers of rough seas and storms. We had to rush to shore the first chance we got.

Our boat had no captain, but thank God it reached a small island. The island was so small that it had no name on our map. We stayed there, waiting for the winds to calm down and for someone to rescue us.

Seven days later, a U.S. naval ship saw us and we were luckily rescued by them and brought to Guam Island along with other Vietnamese refugees.

INTERVIEWER Having been here for some years, what are your impressions of the United States?

LY We live in Chicago, but we still miss our country. What we like most here are freedom and opportunities. What

we do not like here is that it is extremely difficult for parents to educate their children.

In Vietnam, children listen to their parents with love and respect. Over here, parents have to listen to their children and fulfill their "demands." In our homeland children are gifts from God. In this country children are often considered burdens!

### **Parent's Opinions of Bilingual Programs**

INTERVIEWER I understand that you have a child attending a bilingual program. What are your opinions of your child's education?

LY We feel that Hai has received a good education in the United States. We do not have any view on the value of bilingual programs for learning English since my son did not need it for that. He overcame the language problem and is quite fluent in English now.

INTERVIEWER So why did you enroll your son in a bilingual program?

LY We are concerned with the cultural aspect of the program. We want our child exposed to Asian culture so he will continue to be a good son at home, a good student in school, and a good citizen in society.

INTERVIEWER In other words, you believe that attending only regular classrooms would be problematic for your son?

LY Yes and no. No, because my son speaks, reads, and writes English very well. Yes, because bilingual programs help my child in another way.

INTERVIEWER May I know in what way?

LY Everyone knows that it is easy to learn bad things. Good things are difficult to practice. My wife and I do not want our son involved in drugs, gangs, and crime. Raising children here in Chicago is a hundred times more difficult than in Vietnam. In Vietnam, children obey their parents and teachers. In the U.S., parents and teachers have to cater to the kids.

INTERVIEWER You mean bilingual programs are able to safeguard your child from drugs, gangs, and crime?

LY Of course. Peer pressure, you know. My son listens to his friends. He rarely listens to me. So if we have our son in a class of all Asian children with Asian cultural backgrounds, he has the right kind of friends. Furthermore, our son's Vietnamese teachers and other Vietnamese parents talk to one another about their children's education, and we learn about our son's activities in school without pressuring him.

In addition to retaining our cultural values, our family believes in going back to Asia to visit relatives from time to time. My son has retained his first language and is able to speak to our relatives in

Vietnamese. He has also retained his good manners.

That makes our life more meaningful, doesn't it?

#### **8. THE DOAN FAMILY**

*Interviewee:* mother

*Level of education:* high school

*Annual income:* about \$15,000

*Time of immigration:* second wave

*Push or pull factor:* push

*Journey to America:* hardships

*Opinions of bilingual programs:* supports bilingual programs

#### **The Family Background**

Hung was 11 when his father, a captain in the South Vietnamese army, was killed. He and his sister escaped the war-torn nation to Cambodia, where they were to be transferred to a refugee camp in Thailand. On the way, his sister was gang-raped and killed by Cambodian criminals.

A year later, in 1989, Hung emigrated to the U.S. with the help of a voluntary agency. Two years later, his mother, Thien Doan, was reunited with her son in Chicago.

Because Hung was 12 years of age at the time of arrival, he was enrolled in a bilingual program at a Chicago public elementary school. He completed eighth grade in 1992 and was transferred to a high school bilingual program in September, 1992. He is planning to graduate from high school in June, 1996.

The mother, who completed high school in Vietnam, is now working as a cook for a Vietnamese restaurant in Uptown Chicago.

## **The Family's Journey to America**

INTERVIEWER Mrs. Doan, may I know more about your journey to America?

DOAN I escaped Vietnam by land, walking through Cambodia to Thailand. My husband, a captain in the Vietnam army, was killed during the war. He left me a daughter, Chau Doan, and a son, Hung Doan.

INTERVIEWER Why did your children leave Vietnam before you?

DOAN No. We three left Vietnam at the same time, but I was arrested in Cambodia and was jailed there for two years. Losing their mother, my two children barely escaped to the Cambodia border where my daughter was gang-raped to death. My little son, Hung Doan, 11 years old, ran to the Thai border and was rescued after a horrible ordeal.

INTERVIEWER That's why you came to Chicago two years after your son had arrived here?

DOAN Yes. I was jailed and tortured in Cambodia for two years. My older brother-in-law knew I had been arrested and tried to find me. After three months of searching, he discovered where I was in Cambodia. He came to see me and bribed the Khmer Rouge soldiers for my release. My brother-in-law also walked with me to the Thai border before he turned back to Vietnam.

INTERVIEWER Why did you leave Vietnam in such a dangerous way?



DOAN I had no choice. My husband had been a military officer of the old regime, so the Communists considered our family their enemy. I could not go to work, and my children were not allowed to go to school. We had no way out in our own country. The only thing we could think of was to risk our lives in search of freedom in another country, hopefully, the United States.

INTERVIEWER Why did you choose to go on foot?

DOAN Because we had no money. It cost a lot of money to escape by boat. We would have had to pay the boat owner and bribe Communist soldiers along the way. How could I have enough money to pay such a price for myself and my two children?

#### **Parent's Opinions of Bilingual Programs**

INTERVIEWER Your son, Hung Doan, attended a bilingual program in elementary school and is now attending a bilingual program at a Chicago public secondary school. As a mother, what is your opinion of your child's bilingual program?

DOAN As I told you earlier, my children were not allowed to go to school in Vietnam because their father had worked for an American-supported government. So my son needed as much education as he could get when he arrived in Chicago. Because my son spoke no English at the time of his arrival, a bilingual program, I think, was best for him educationally and emotionally.

INTERVIEWER Why was it best for him educationally?

DOAN He was helped by bilingual teachers who could interact with him in both languages and understand his culture while he learned English. Bilingual teachers walked with my son through elementary school and got him through high school. They are now helping him enroll at a university in the Chicago area in September, 1996.

INTERVIEWER Why was it best for him emotionally?

DOAN My son lost his father at the age of 11, his mother was arrested and jailed, and he witnessed his sister gang-raped to death. Imagine a young boy suffering so many horrible ordeals in so short a period of time. He may have died or still be in a mental health clinic.

In bilingual classes, he could speak Vietnamese with his teachers and friends, he could share his feelings and thoughts with his peers in his mother tongue, and he could meet with other students who had suffered the same struggles. These activities helped release him from stress, loneliness, and boredom. He learned how to "let bygones be bygones" and how to cope with the reality of his new homeland.

## 9. THE LUU FAMILY

*Interviewee:* mother

*Level of education:* college

*Annual income:* about \$35,000

*Time of immigration:* first wave

*Push or pull factor:* push

*Journey to America:* hardships

*Opinions of bilingual programs:* supports bilingual programs  
on cultural level

### The Family Background

Mr. Dat Luu, Mrs. Thanh Luu, and their children escaped Vietnam by two different boats at different times in 1976. The parents arrived in the U.S. in 1978, and in 1979 their five children who were born in Vietnam reunited with them in Michigan. They stayed there for a year and then moved to Chicago. Both parents were teachers in Vietnam before the fall of Saigon in April, 1975. They are now teachers in Chicago. Their children studied hard and were successful in school.

The five older children, Nhan, Le, Nghia, Tri, and Tin, received engineering degrees on the same day at the same university in Chicago. The two youngest children, Dzung, 17, and Hanh, 18 (born in the United States), attend a high school bilingual program and will graduate in June, 1996. They, too, want to enroll in a university and become engineers.

Mr. and Mrs. Luu always stressed learning and laid down strict rules for their seven children. "It's like the ancient Greeks who considered education as a virtue in itself," said the mother. According to Mrs. Luu, parents'

expectations and the family's support play an essential role in the success or failure of children in school.

### **The Family's Journey to America**

INTERVIEWER Why did you decide to leave your country?

LUU We knew that the Communist regime in Vietnam would never accept us because we were educated people. There was no room for our family in a Communist country. The Communist government only uses peasants as their loyal cadres, blindly working for them. The Communist government never trusted us. Besides, teachers working under the Communist regime had to teach Communist doctrines and slogans. We also had to teach whatever the government dictated us to teach. We had no freedom in teaching in Vietnam. Lesson plans had to be prepared well in advance, criticized by other teachers, and then approved by Communist cadres in charge of schools before they could be taught.

Also, we left Vietnam for the future of our seven children. In that Communist society, my children had no future. They would have had to join the army to fight in Cambodia and perhaps would someday die for nothing.

INTERVIEWER When did you leave your country?

LUU When Saigon fell in 1975, my husband, our five children, and myself were hidden by friends. Seven months later, an attempt to escape the country was

betrayed and our family was jailed. We were released 13 months later. We then planned the second escape.

The children escaped by boat to Indonesia, where they ended up in the Galang refugee camp. Ten days later my husband and I left Vietnam on a small boat. It brought us to Malaysia, and we ended up in the Pulau Bidong refugee camp.

Upon arrival in Malaysia we luckily learned that our five children were alive in Indonesia. We communicated with our children by mail and all decided to settle in the United States.

INTERVIEWER What agency sponsored your family to the United States?

LUU My husband and I were sponsored by a Catholic church in Hudsonville, Michigan, in 1978. The five older children were reunited with us in July, 1979, in Grand Rapids, Michigan, where they entered school. The following year, the family moved to Chicago to join other Vietnamese friends and to enroll our children in schools in the Chicago area.

INTERVIEWER It seems to me that your journey to America tended to go smoothly.

LUU No. I think otherwise. The fact that we had to divide our family into two groups would tell you how difficult it was to escape from Vietnam. Our family was among

the luckiest. Thousands of Vietnamese escapees like us died at sea or were killed by pirates.

Our escape wasn't easy. It took us 15 days to reach Malaysia. We had no water or food. Often we lost our hope, too. It took 30 days for my five children to reach Indonesia. High winds, rough seas, and a broken boat engine made my children's trip miserable.

### **Parent's Opinions of Bilingual Programs**

INTERVIEWER I have learned that you have children attending bilingual classes. Why did you decide on such a course?

LUU My two youngest children, born in the United States, were very good in English, and they were able to handle assignments in regular, or "mainstream," classes easily. So they did not need a bilingual program on that basis.

INTERVIEWER So what was the reason behind enrolling them?

LUU To be honest with you, we wanted to teach all of our children at home because there are so many problems in American public schools nowadays. I did not want those problems to influence and ruin the lives of my children.

INTERVIEWER You still have something more to explain?

LUU Yes. As a mother, I wanted to enroll my children in programs that would benefit them. School should be a

safe place for them to study. After visiting the school, I found that bilingual classes would be good for my children, not for learning English but for discipline, attendance, and cultural activities that could unite them with good friends. I did not want my children to make friends with the so-called "bad boys" or "bad girls." I wanted them to have good friends and concentrate on learning and living a life that makes sense.

Besides, there is a channel of communication between school and home via Vietnamese teachers. They let us know about our children's progress in school. They also share with us any problems our children have in school. We parents also talk with one another very often about the education of our children. These factors make us, as parents, feel safe and informed. In short, I do not support bilingual programs because they teach my children English, but I still need them for the sake of my children's welfare in school.

## **10. THE CAO FAMILY**

*Interviewee:* mother

*Level of education:* elementary

*Annual income:* about \$12,000

*Time of immigration:* second wave

*Push or pull factor:* pull

*Journey to America:* no hardships

*Opinions of bilingual programs:* supports bilingual programs

### **The Family Background**

Mrs. Phuong Cao and her husband Thanh Cao arrived in Chicago in 1989. They have four children, Cong, Dung, Ngon, and Hanh. Cong, 25, Dung, 23, and Ngon, 21, are attending college. Hanh, 17, is a senior in a bilingual program at a Chicago public secondary school. The father works at a gas station near his house, and the mother works as a tailor for a Vietnamese store in Uptown. They earn enough money to pay for rent, food, and clothes and to support the education of their children. In Vietnam, Mr. Cao was a fisherman and Mrs. Cao was a housewife. They lived in a small fishing village, and their children had little education in their home town.

### **The Family's Journey to America**

INTERVIEWER Why did you decide to leave your country?

CAO After ten years of living under the Communist regime, my family had suffered a great deal. We worked very hard but received very little because you worked according to your ability but received based on your needs, as determined by the government.

Under communism, there is no private ownership. Everything belongs to the community. Everything is



managed by the government, and we had to join the fishing cooperative.

We decided to leave Vietnam also because of our children. If we stayed in Vietnam, my children could not have gone to college. They would have had to join the army and fight in Cambodia or at the Chinese border.

INTERVIEWER Did you leave by boat, by land, or another way? Why did you choose that means?

CAO We left Vietnam by boat in 1985. Because we were fishermen, we had our own boat and we just got on board and sailed east from central Vietnam.

INTERVIEWER May I know the story of your journey to America?

CAO Our trip was peaceful, partly because as fishermen we knew how to manage our boat for a safe trip and how to reach our destination. Also, thanks to God's blessing, during our journey, the seas were calm.

INTERVIEWER What was your destination?

CAO Our destination was the Philippines. When our boat got close to Manila, Filipino coast guards approached us. They knew we were Vietnamese refugees by look and escorted us to a police station near Manila. We stayed there for two weeks for identification checking, security screening, and health exams. We then were

transported to an island called Palawan, about 500 miles from Manila.

INTERVIEWER How long did you stay at the camp?

CAO We had to stay there for two years because the United Nations considered us "economic" refugees, not "political" refugees.

INTERVIEWER What were your days like in the camp?

CAO The U.N. offered ESL and CO classes, and we had to attend. We had to work for our neighborhoods in the camp -- cleaning the streets, fixing old houses, and building new houses for new-arrival refugees.

INTERVIEWER When did you arrive in the United States and what were your first impressions?

CAO We arrived in Chicago in July, 1989. It was hot in Chicago and we saw many people outdoors. We rented an apartment in Uptown, where many Vietnamese live. We spoke little English and had to depend on our countrymen who had come here before us to guide us in many ways.

To us, the U.S. is a rich country and Chicago is a beautiful city, especially along Lake Michigan and downtown. We are very pleased to be here because our two goals have been achieved: 1) to have a decent life; and 2) to have our children continue their schooling.

INTERVIEWER Having lived in the U.S. for some time, what values do your family hold to? Are these values more Vietnamese, more American, or a combination of both.

CAO The United States is our second homeland. We must learn English to survive, and we must understand American culture to deal with people of all races. We know for sure that we cannot change the color of our skin, so we have to keep the best parts of Vietnamese culture, too. We communicate with our children in Vietnamese at home.

#### **Parent's Opinions of Bilingual Programs**

INTERVIEWER I understand that you have a child attending a bilingual program in a Chicago public secondary school. What is your opinion of the bilingual program for your child? Do you support or oppose bilingual education and why?

CAO I support the bilingual program because my child likes it, learns a great deal from it, and now speaks both English and Vietnamese fluently, thanks to the services provided by the program.

INTERVIEWER Which bilingual program do you prefer: teach all subjects equally in both languages; teach all subjects in English and add a course in Vietnamese language and culture; teach all subjects in Vietnamese and add a course in English language and American culture?

CAO I would like my child to learn all subjects equally in both languages. In that way, she gains enrichment from her native language and culture and at the same time learns English and American ways of life.

INTERVIEWER How do you think bilingual education has affected your child's success at school?

CAO My child spoke little English at the time she entered high school. Sitting in classes where teachers taught in English and textbooks were also in English, how could she survive in school? I think she would have had to give up school and return home or do something else because it would make no sense for her to be there, doing nothing and understanding nothing.

INTERVIEWER After many years in the United States and having had four children attend bilingual programs, what suggestions do you have with regard to bilingual programs that could benefit other Vietnamese children who may be emigrating to the United States in the future.

CAO Three of my children graduated from high school and are attending colleges. One more will graduate this June and will be in college as well. So there is nothing wrong with bilingual programs. As for improving the program in the future, I would like to offer two suggestions. The Vietnamese bilingual teachers should continue to improve their English so they can better

teach our children, and they also should return to school periodically to learn more about their subject matter as new things develop. Teachers must continuously upgrade themselves and teach our children with updated materials.

### Findings

Ten parents were randomly selected for this interview research. They were chosen from a pool of more than 300 Vietnamese parents of students attending bilingual programs in Chicago public secondary schools in the 1995-96 school year. There were five parents, two fathers and three mothers, who emigrated to the United States in the 1970s, or in the first wave (era) of refugees; and there were five parents, three fathers and two mothers, who emigrated to the United States in the 1980s, or in the second wave (era) of refugees. The ten parents were each interviewed in depth twice by the researcher.

The 1975-79 Vietnamese parents, or first-wave refugees, had higher levels of education than the 1980s arrivals. They also had higher levels of income. The first-wave Vietnamese refugees did not favor bilingual programs as a means of educating their children in English language and other core subjects. However, they believed that bilingual programs could help their children retain their culture and language and prevent them from getting involved in drugs, gangs, and

and prevent them from getting involved in drugs, gangs, and crime.

In contrast, the second-wave refugees strongly supported bilingual programs because without them, they felt, their children would have to drop out of school due to incompetence in English and failure in other subjects. Almost all of the interviewees, regardless of gender, income, or level of education, preferred that Vietnamese be spoken at home.

### Analysis of the Findings

#### **1. The parents' gender and parental opinions of bilingual programs for their children**

There was no sense of agreement between the Vietnamese parents' gender and parental opinions of bilingual programs for their children. Interactions and responses were similar for fathers and mothers during interviews with the researcher. The one difference was that mothers tended to talk longer; fathers tended to be brief and to the point.

The role of women in Vietnam is equal to that of men (Nguyen, 1972, p. 63): "In Chinese culture, women are inferior to men; in Cham culture, an independent country annexed during the 16th century by the Vietnamese, women are superior to men; in Vietnamese culture, women are equal to

men." Both the father and the mother are decision-makers in the family, and both parents usually hold similar opinions.

**2. The parents' level of education and parental opinions of bilingual programs for their children.**

There was a sense of agreement between the Vietnamese parents' level of education and parental opinions of bilingual programs for their children. Basically, the higher the level of education of parents, the more likely they are to want their children to attend bilingual programs not so much to learn English as to retain cultural values and/or avert involvement with drugs, gangs, and crime.

The interviews also revealed a sense of agreement between lower levels of parental education and opinions of bilingual programs. In general, the lower the level of parental education, the more likely they are to want their children enrolled in bilingual programs for purposes of learning English.

**3. The parents' annual income and parental opinions of bilingual programs for their children**

There was a sense of agreement between the Vietnamese parents' annual income and parental opinions of bilingual programs. Essentially, the higher the level of income of the parents, the more likely they are to want their children to attend mainstream education programs or to attend

bilingual programs for other purposes than learning English and understanding instruction in other subjects.

Review also suggests that the lower the level of parental annual income, the more likely parents are to want their children to participate in bilingual programs. Poor families in Vietnam had little chance to go to school, to learn English, or to attain higher education as in rich families. Thus, they wish to pursue every opportunity in the United States.

The differences among waves of refugees are also reflected in income levels. The income levels of the first wave of immigrants tend to be higher than those of the second wave (Stein, 1981). Years of education are also a clear determinant of economic success (Walker, 1987).

#### **4. The parents' era of emigration and parental opinions of bilingual programs for their children**

This study appeared to show that there was a sense of agreement between the parents' era of emigration and parental opinions of bilingual programs. In general, the earlier the arrival of parents in the United States, the more likely they are to want their children to attend mainstream education programs or to attend bilingual programs for cultural rather than strictly educational purposes. Conversely, the later the arrival of the parents



in the United States, the more likely they are to want their children to participate in bilingual programs for the purpose of learning English.

A developing theory applied to refugees suggests that people leaving their native country at different points in time have distinct characteristics (Stein, 1981). The educated and the urban elite are motivated to migrate in the first wave. Less-educated emigrants and relatives of the first-wave people leave their countries of origin in the second wave (Walker, 1987).

**5. Reasons for emigrating (push and pull factors) and parental opinions of bilingual programs for their children**

Eight of the ten parents left Vietnam because they felt they had no choice. They were "pushed" to leave their homeland because of the Communist takeover of South Vietnam in 1975. There was no room for them in the restructured society. They left their homeland in response to political, economic, and religious persecution, among other factors (Rutledge, 1992).

**6. The rigors of the parents' journeys to America and their determination to enroll their children in bilingual programs**

There was a sense of agreement between the parents' journeys to America and their determination to enroll their children in bilingual programs. Nine out of ten parents interviewed by the researcher endured hardships leaving Vietnam. Their journeys to America were horrible ordeals. Concomitantly, once here they were determined to work very hard and to encourage their children to go to school, continue on to college, find jobs, and become productive members of American society. In other words, there was a sense of agreement between the price (in the sense of sacrifice and hardships) refugees had to pay for their journey to America and the efforts they made in their new homeland. The riskier their emigration, the harder they tried to become self-sufficient faster in their adopted country (Cao, 1995).

## CHAPTER V

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

#### Introduction

This study is an exploratory effort to obtain data on parental opinions of Vietnamese bilingual education programs in the Chicago public secondary schools. It is clear from the study that the use of the Vietnamese language at home is almost universally favored, but parental opinions of bilingual education are not conclusive. Those Vietnamese immigrants who came here in the 1970s seemed to favor regular education, an all-English program. Those who came to the United States in the 1980s mostly supported bilingual education.

#### Implications

Since the researcher is a Vietnamese educator and all communication with parents was in both the English and Vietnamese languages, it is hoped that parents in the survey felt at ease in responding to the questions asked in the interviews. The participation of the parents was therefore viewed as sincere and honest.

In exploring the opinions of Vietnamese parents toward bilingual education programs, this study should provide educators a basis for reexamining their programs in the interest of meeting the needs of their students. School administrators should realize that not all refugees or immigrants need or want the same educational programs. Krashen and Biber (1988) made it clear that different teaching methods and materials must be devised for specific minorities and that one minority differs from another due to different sociocultural backgrounds.

### Discussions

In Vietnam, the family is the center of the individual's life. Family loyalty is important, and family identity can be a source of pride or dishonor. A behavioral deviation might not only hurt one's self but also one's family. The members of the family have a strong sense of duty and responsibility toward each other (Thuy, 1984; and Cao, 1995). To maintain this tradition, almost all Vietnamese parents want their children to speak Vietnamese at home (Wei, 1980; and Vu, 1996).

Religious philosophies have shaped Vietnamese thinking, behavior, and cultural characteristics. From China, Confucianism spread south to Vietnam. This religious philosophy provided a code of social behavior stressing respect for learning, respect for the family, and respect

for authority (Khoa, 1995). That is a possible reason why so many parents made themselves available for this study.

Success or failure for Vietnamese students in American schools is dependent on command of the English language (Cummins, 1987). English is the tool by which they survive in social and academic situations. Chances for survival increase by attaining proficiency and literacy skills in the English language. Holding this belief, most of the highly educated Vietnamese parents who arrived in the United States during the 1970s preferred that their children be immersed in English through regular education programs, where the student had no choice but to sink or swim.

For those parents with little or no education, who arrived in the United States during the 1980s as economic refugees, bilingual education programs seemed to be preferred. Because both parents and students spoke little or no English and had minimal educational background to help them adapt successfully to American regular classrooms, they opted for bilingual education programs. These programs utilized Vietnamese as the medium of instruction in all subjects and ESL methods for teaching newcomers English until they could become functional in American regular classrooms.

In Vietnamese culture, parents are humiliated and lose respect among their friends if their children do not do well

in their studies (Vu, 1995). Yet many immigrant children, arriving in the United States, were classified as limited-English-proficient (LEP) students. They sought help from sympathetic teachers, from classmates, and from friends and family members. They had to study English, but in order not to fall behind, they also needed to learn core subject areas such as mathematics, science, and history, and these were taught in Vietnamese. This strategy proved effective enough to overcome the language hurdle within a reasonable time.

### Recommendations

Based on the results of parental interviews and the findings of this work, the investigator of this field study will sum up the parents' recommendations and also offer his own suggestions for the consideration of parents, teachers, and school administrators. The goal is to improve the quality of education of new immigrant children in our nation's public schools.

### Parents' Recommendations

*For English-only program.* Most of the Vietnamese immigrants who participated in this study came to the United States to flee political persecution and consequent economic deprivation in their homeland. The majority of them probably do not expect to return to Vietnam and are determined to remain permanently in the United States. The

only choice they have is to strive to attain a place in American society. One means of accomplishing this is through education.

As immigrants from Vietnam, the participants of this study brought with them to the United States the ideology of Confucianism, which dictates respect for family elders and those in authority, while attaining status through education and good conduct. The Vietnamese consider family first and society second. Therefore, members of a family are most pleased when children meet and exceed familial expectations (Powers, 1994).

Those parents who came here in the 1970s recognized the importance of learning English; they did not wish their children to be taught in Vietnamese. Getting a good education quickly by learning English fast would better help them in the future, they reasoned.

*For Bilingual program.* Those parents who came here in the 1980s preferred that their children entering American schools be taught in Vietnamese. This group of parents strongly supported bilingual education. With bilingual education, their children could raise questions and receive explanations in their primary language.

Bilingual education might be necessary for students who have had only a few years of education in Vietnam. Because

of their age when they arrive in the United States, they may be enrolled in high schools notwithstanding their lack of both English proficiency and preparation for high school subject matter. For these students, attending an all-English program is an overwhelming challenge.

There was consensus among Vietnamese parents that their children should retain their language, possibly because it made them feel comfortable culturally and as a closely knit family. In addition, using Vietnamese at home was a way for children to show respect for their parents. Also, using Vietnamese at home was convenient since not all family members were equally proficient in English.

#### Investigator's Recommendations

*For parents.* Since parents are the first teachers of their children, they should be responsible for: 1) making schooling a top priority in the family and insisting that schools place academic scholarship at the core of all school activities; 2) providing positive models of behavior for their children and teaching them the three Rs: their rights, their responsibilities, and how to rise to their greatest human potentials; 3) promoting the benefits of bilingualism and multiculturalism as resources for success in the national and international marketplace; 4) ensuring that home and community cultural knowledge and practice are



significantly represented in the school's curriculum, including the use of native languages and cultural legacies for teaching and learning. In addition, parents who have positive attitudes toward the education of their children are "more likely to try academic improvement strategies for appropriate lengths of time" (O'Reilly, 1992, p. 281).

*For teachers.* Teachers should expect our schools: 1) to provide curriculum standards for bilingual programs and instruction of LEP students just as for every other instructional program, and improvement of instruction should be one of the primary duties of all school department heads. Schools should offer in-service programs to teachers covering effective bilingual teaching methods and techniques (Wilkerson, 1988); 2) to focus on effective bilingual instructional strategies such as problem-based and project-based learning, use of peer tutoring, and collaborative learning; 3) to have the explicit objective of developing immigrant students' English language proficiency, while also developing the native language proficiency of limited-English speakers in order to increase the number of bilingual and bicultural high school graduates; 4) to support interactive bilingual education technologies that help document program accountability on the basis of student achievement and program accomplishments; 5) to identify and

implement the best bilingual instructional practices as proven by sound assessments. Schools should provide bilingual programs to refugee or immigrant students to ease their initial resettlement period at both the elementary and secondary levels (Thao, 1994).

### Conclusions

Studies have found that bilingual programs have a positive effect on the cognitive characteristics of children in the Chicago public schools (Merlos, 1978; and Collier, 1992). If we are to have more effective instructional programs for all students, especially bilingual programs for LEP students, our educational system must be prepared to take innovative directions (Garcia, 1994). If bilingual educational programs are to improve significantly by the year 2000 and beyond, and if such programs are to continue to play a substantive role in school reform efforts, then schools, parents, and local and federal governments must assume specific roles in educating our children (Vallas, 1996).

It has become evident that American education is perpetuating a nineteenth-century curriculum as we embark into the twenty-first century. In most cases, schools are still involved in pursuing curricula that are predominantly monocultural, mononational, and monolingual at a time when we are seriously challenged by the reality of

multiculturalism on a shrinking planet. If we are going to succeed as a nation that prides itself on educating its youth, teachers and administrators need to broaden their backgrounds in order to understand immigrants within their own communities, as well as people in other parts of the world. Effective local, national, and even global interactions require not only that people communicate cross-culturally but that they understand and value different perspectives and patterns of thinking.

A vision of the future of education should be initiated. We should move forward from monocultural and bilingual to multicultural and multilingual education. The curriculum generally needs to find a place for multiple objective worlds while still incorporating those perspectives and voices now included in the mainstream course of study. For the enrichment of all, maps of knowledge need to be redrawn to include ethnic minorities (Baker, 1995).

It is hoped that this study may be part of that vision. It is specifically aimed at helping educational policymakers create new paths of knowledge based on a wider understanding of Vietnamese culture and expectations. It is more broadly aimed at assisting teachers in basing the curriculum on principles that emphasize community collaboration, serve the

needs of local ethnic groups, and promote consciousness of self in the context of the mainstream culture.

It is further hoped that this study has contributed to the research that has already been done and will stimulate further research for the improvement of the education of all American immigrant children.

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## APPENDIX A

### INTRODUCTORY LETTER TO PROSPECTIVE PARTICIPANTS

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Dear Parents of Vietnamese Students:

As a Vietnamese educator who has lived in Chicago for more than twenty years, I have a keen interest in learning about the educational experience of Vietnamese who have emigrated to the United States during the past two decades.

You have been selected as a candidate for a study I would like to make of the education of young Vietnamese students in the bilingual programs of Chicago public secondary schools.

It is my plan to have two interviews with those parents chosen for this study, preferably in your home or at some other place convenient to you. At the first interview, we shall explore your experiences in Vietnam and your family background. Some questions about your educational experiences will be asked. Shortly thereafter, a transcription of the conversation will be provided to you so that you may review it and be assured that it is correct and reflects your thoughts.

A second interview will follow, during which your journey to America will be discussed, and your thoughts on bilingual programs for your children will be explored.

If you are willing to make yourself available for this study, you may reach me by telephone at 312/278-6766. If you do become a participant, your experiences and thoughts could benefit many future immigrants.

## APPENDIX B

### STARTER QUESTIONS ASKED FOR REFLECTIVE DIALOGUE DURING FIRST INTERVIEW

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1. May I know your name and age and how long you have lived in Chicago?
2. Were your children born in Vietnam or the United States?
3. What are the school grade levels of your children in this school year?
4. What is the level of education you completed in Vietnam? In the United States?
5. What was your occupation and income in Vietnam? In the United States?

APPENDIX C

FOLLOW-UP LETTER

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Dear Parents of Vietnamese Students:

Attached is a transcript of our interview on \_\_\_\_\_. Please read it to make certain that it accurately reflects the content of the interview. You may want to change or add to some of your replies, perhaps because you have reflected upon the situation and have a different view of it today. Please write any changes down so that I can clearly understand them.

Please be assured that only you and I will read the transcript. No real names will be used in my study -- only the ideas you provide.

I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to talk to you and learn from you. Your ideas are important in reaching conclusions that I am sure will be helpful in the future education of other Vietnamese.

I will call you in a few days to set up our second interview. At that time, we will review the transcript and any changes you might have.

## APPENDIX D

### STARTER QUESTIONS ASKED FOR REFLECTIVE DIALOGUE DURING SECOND INTERVIEW

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#### **Second Interview: Questions Asked for Information about the Family's Journey to America**

1. Why did you decide to leave your country?
2. Did you come here by boat, by land, or another way?
3. May I know the story of your journey to America?
4. When did you arrive in the United States, and what were your first impressions?
5. Having been living in the United States, what values does your family hold to? Are these values more Vietnamese, more American, or a combination of both?

#### **Second Interview: Questions Asked for Information about the Parent's Opinions of Bilingual Programs**

1. You have children attending bilingual programs in a Chicago public secondary school. What are your opinions of these bilingual programs for your children? Do you support or oppose bilingual education? Why?
2. What are your opinions regarding the use of Vietnamese by your children in school and at home?
3. Which bilingual programs do you prefer and why: teach all subjects equally in both languages; teach all subjects in English but add a course in Vietnamese language and culture; teach all subjects in Vietnamese

but add a course in English language and American culture?

4. How do you think bilingual education (or the lack of it) has affected your children's success at school?
5. After many years in the United States, what suggestions do you have with regard to bilingual programs that could benefit other Vietnamese children who may be emigrating to the United States in the future?

THE SCHOOL CODE OF ILLINOIS AS IT  
PERTAINS TO BILINGUAL EDUCATION

The School Code of Illinois

CHAPTER 122 — SCHOOLS

ARTICLE 14C. TRANSITIONAL  
BILINGUAL EDUCATION

Par.

- 14C-1. Legislative finding and declaration.
- 14C-2. Definitions.
- 14C-2.1. Establishment of programs until July 1, 1976.
- 14C-3. Language classification of children—Establishment of program—Period of participation—Examination.
- 14C-4. Notice of enrollment—Content—Rights of parents.
- 14C-5. Nonresident children—Enrollment and tuition—Joint programs.
- 14C-6. Placement of children.
- 14C-7. Participation in extracurricular activities of public schools.
- 14C-8. Teacher certification—Qualification—Issuance of certificates.
- 14C-9. Tenure—Minimum salaries.
- 14C-10. Parent and community participation.
- 14C-11. Preschool or summer school programs.
- 14C-12. Account of expenditures—Cost report—Reimbursement.
- 14C-13. Advisory Council.

*Article 14C was added by P.A. 78-727, § 1, eff. October 1, 1973.*

14C-1. Legislative finding and declaration

§ 14C-1. Legislative finding and declaration. The General Assembly finds that there are large numbers of children in this State who come from environments where the primary language is other than English. Experience has shown that public school classes in which instruction is given only in English are often inadequate for the education of children whose native tongue is another language. The General Assembly believes that a program of transitional bilingual education can meet the needs of these children and facilitate their integration into the regular public school curriculum. Therefore, pursuant to the policy of this State to insure equal educational opportunity to every child, and in recognition of the educational needs of children of limited English-speaking ability, and in recognition of the success of the limited existing bilingual programs conducted pursuant to Sections 10-22.38a and 34-18.2 of The School Code, it is the purpose of this Act to provide for the establishment of transitional bilingual education programs in the public schools, and to provide supplemental financial assistance to help local school districts meet the extra costs of such programs. Added by P.A. 78-727, § 1, eff. Oct. 1, 1973.

14C-2. Definitions

§ 14C-2. Definitions. Unless the context indicates otherwise, the terms used in this Article have the following meanings:

- (a) "State Board" means the State Board of Education;
- (b) "Certification Board" means the State Teacher Certification Board;
- (c) "School District" means any school district established under this Code;
- (d) "Children of limited English-speaking ability" means (1) children who were not born in the United States whose native tongue is a language other than English and who are incapable of performing ordinary classwork in English;

and (2) children who were born in the United States of parents possessing no or limited English-speaking ability and who are incapable of performing ordinary classwork in English;

(e) "Teacher of transitional bilingual education" means a teacher with a speaking and reading ability in a language other than English in which transitional bilingual education is offered and with communicative skills in English;

(f) "Program in transitional bilingual education" means a full-time program of instruction (1) in all those courses or subjects which a child is required by law to receive and which are required by the child's school district which shall be given in the native language of the children of limited English-speaking ability who are enrolled in the program and also in English, (2) in the reading and writing of the native language of the children of limited English-speaking ability who are enrolled in the program and in the oral comprehension, speaking, reading and writing of English, and (3) in the history and culture of the country, territory or geographic area which is the native land of the parents of children of limited English-speaking ability who are enrolled in the program and in the history and culture of the United States; or a part-time program of instruction based on the educational needs of those children of limited English-speaking ability who do not need a full-time program of instruction.

Amended by P.A. 81-1508, § 13, eff. Sept. 25, 1980.

14C-2.1. Establishment of programs until July 1, 1976

§ 14C-2.1. Establishment of programs until July 1, 1976. School boards of any school districts that maintain a recognized school, whether operating under the general law or under a special charter, may until July 1, 1976, depending on available state aid, and shall thereafter, subject to any limitations hereinafter specified, establish and maintain such transitional bilingual programs as may be needed for children of limited English-speaking ability as authorized by this Article.

Added by P.A. 78-727, § 1, eff. Oct. 1, 1973.

14C-3. Language classification of children—Establishment of program—Period of participation—Examination

§ 14C-3. Language classification of children; establishment of program; period of participation; examination. Each school district shall ascertain, not later than the first day of March, under regulations prescribed by the State Board, the number of children of limited English-speaking ability within the school district, and shall classify them according to the language of which they possess a primary speaking ability, and their grade level, age or achievement level.

When, at the beginning of any school year, there is within an attendance center of a school district not including children who are enrolled in existing private school systems, 20 or more children of limited English-speaking ability in any such language classification, the school district shall establish, for each classification, a program in transitional bilingual education for the children therein. A school district may establish a program in transitional bilingual education with respect to any classification with less than 20 children therein, but should a school district decide not to establish such a program, the school district

## CHAPTER 122 — SCHOOLS

shall provide a locally determined transitional program of instruction which, based upon an individual student language assessment, provides content area instruction in a language other than English to the extent necessary to ensure that each student can benefit from educational instruction and achieve an early and effective transition into the regular school curriculum.

Every school-age child of limited English-speaking ability not enrolled in existing private school systems shall be enrolled and participate in the program in transitional bilingual education established for the classification to which he belongs by the school district in which he resides for a period of 3 years or until such time as he achieves a level of English language skills which will enable him to perform successfully in classes in which instruction is given only in English, whichever shall first occur.

A child of limited English-speaking ability enrolled in a program in transitional bilingual education may, in the discretion of the school district and subject to the approval of the child's parent or legal guardian, continue in that program for a period longer than 3 years.

An examination in the oral comprehension, speaking, reading and writing of English, as prescribed by the State Board, shall be administered annually to all children of limited English-speaking ability enrolled and participating in a program in transitional bilingual education. No school district shall transfer a child of limited English-speaking ability out of a program in transitional bilingual education prior to his third year of enrollment therein unless the parents of the child approve the transfer in writing, and unless the child has received a score on said examination which, in the determination of the State Board, reflects a level of English language skills appropriate to his or her grade level.

If later evidence suggests that a child so transferred is still handicapped by an inadequate command of English, he may be re-enrolled in the program for a length of time equal to that which remained at the time he was transferred.

Amended by P.A. 84-126, Art. IV, § 2, eff. Aug. 1, 1985.

### 14C-4. Notice of enrollment—Content—Rights of parents

§ 14C-4. Notice of enrollment—Content—Rights of parents. No later than 10 days after the enrollment of any child in a program in transitional bilingual education the school district in which the child resides shall notify by mail the parents or legal guardian of the child of the fact that their child has been enrolled in a program in transitional bilingual education. The notice shall contain a simple, nontechnical description of the purposes, method and content of the program in which the child is enrolled and shall inform the parents that they have the right to visit transitional bilingual education classes in which their child is enrolled and to come to the school for a conference to explain the nature of transitional bilingual education. Said notice shall further inform the parents that they have the absolute right, if they so wish, to withdraw their child from a program in transitional bilingual education in the manner as hereinafter provided.

The notice shall be in writing in English and in the language of which the child of the parents so notified possesses a primary speaking ability.

Any parent whose child has been enrolled in a program in transitional bilingual education shall have the absolute right, either at the time of the original notification of enrollment or at the close of any semester thereafter, to withdraw his child from said program by providing written notice of such desire to the school authorities of the school in which his child is enrolled or to the school district in which his child resides; provided that no withdrawal shall be permitted unless such parent is informed in a conference with school district officials of the nature of the program.

Added by P.A. 78-727, § 1, eff. Oct. 1, 1973.

### 14C-5. Nonresident children—Enrollment and tuition—Joint programs

§ 14C-5. Nonresident children—Enrollment and tuition—Joint programs. A school district may allow a nonresident child of limited English-speaking ability to enroll in or attend its program in transitional bilingual education and the tuition for such a child shall be paid by the district in which he resides.

Any school district may join with any other school district or districts to provide the programs in transitional bilingual education required or permitted by this Article.

Added by P.A. 78-727, § 1, eff. Oct. 1, 1973.

### 14C-6. Placement of children

§ 14C-6. Placement of children. Children enrolled in a program of transitional bilingual education whenever possible shall be placed in classes with children of approximately the same age and level of educational attainment. If children of different age groups or educational levels are combined, the school district so combining shall ensure that the instruction given each child is appropriate to his or her level of educational attainment and the school districts shall keep adequate records of the educational level and progress of each child enrolled in a program. The maximum student-teacher ratio shall be set by the State Board and shall reflect the special educational needs of children enrolled in programs in transitional bilingual education. Programs in transitional bilingual education shall, whenever feasible, be located in the regular public schools of the district rather than separate facilities.

Amended by P.A. 81-1508, § 13, eff. Sept. 25, 1980.

### 14C-7. Participation in extracurricular activities of public schools

§ 14C-7. Participation in extracurricular activities of public schools. Instruction in courses of subjects included in a program of transitional bilingual education which are not mandatory may be given in a language other than English. In those courses or subjects in which verbalization is not essential to an understanding of the subject matter, including but not necessarily limited to art, music and physical education, children of limited English-speaking ability shall participate fully with their English-speaking contemporaries in the regular public school classes provided for said subjects. Each school district shall ensure to children enrolled in a program in transitional bilingual education practical and meaningful opportunity to participate fully in the extracurricular activities of the regular public schools in the district.

Added by P.A. 78-727, § 1, eff. Oct. 1, 1973.



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### 14C-8. Teacher certification—Qualification—Issuance of certificates

§ 14C-8. Teacher certification—Qualifications—Issuance of certificates. No person shall be eligible for employment by a school district as a teacher of transitional bilingual education without either (a) holding a valid teaching certificate issued pursuant to Article 21 of this Code<sup>1</sup> and meeting such additional language and course requirements as prescribed by the State Board of Education or (b) meeting the requirements set forth in this Section. School districts shall give preference in employing transitional bilingual education teachers to those individuals who have the relevant foreign cultural background established through residency abroad or by being raised in a non-English speaking environment. The Certification Board shall issue certificates valid for teaching in all grades of the common school in transitional bilingual education programs to any person who presents it with satisfactory evidence that he possesses an adequate speaking and reading ability in a language other than English in which transitional bilingual education is offered and communicative skills in English, and possessed within five years previous to his applying for a certificate under this

Section a valid teaching certificate issued by a foreign country, or by a State or possession or territory of the United States, or other evidence of teaching preparation as may be determined to be sufficient by the Certification Board; provided that any person seeking a certificate under this Section must meet the following additional requirements:

- (1) Such persons must be in good health;
- (2) Such persons must be of sound moral character;
- (3) Such persons must be legally present in the United States and possess legal authorization for employment;
- (4) Such persons must not be employed to replace any presently employed teacher who otherwise would not be replaced for any reason.

Certificates issuable pursuant to this Section shall be issuable only during the 5 years immediately following the effective date of this Act and thereafter for additional periods of one year only upon a determination by the State Board of Education that a school district lacks the number of teachers necessary to comply with the mandatory requirements of Sections 14C-2.1 and 14C-3 of this Article for the establishment and maintenance of programs of transitional bilingual education and said certificates issued by the Certification Board shall be valid for a period of 6 years following their date of issuance and shall not be renewed, except that one renewal for a period of two years may be granted if necessary to permit the holder of a certificate issued under this Section to acquire a teaching certificate pursuant to Article 21 of this Code. Such certificates and the persons to whom they are issued shall be exempt from the provisions of Article 21 of this Code except that Sections 21-12, 21-13, 21-16, 21-17, 21-19, 21-21, 21-22, 21-23 and 21-24 shall continue to be applicable to all such certificates.

After the effective date of this amendatory Act of 1984, an additional renewal for a period to expire August 31, 1985, may be granted. The State Board of Education shall report to the General Assembly on or before January 31, 1985 its recommendations for the qualification of teachers of bilingual education and for the qualification of teachers of English as a second language. Said qualification pro-

gram shall take effect no later than August 31, 1985. Amended by P.A. 83-1270, § 1, eff. Aug. 28, 1984.

<sup>1</sup> Paragraph 21-1 et seq. of this chapter.

### 14C-9. Tenure—Minimum salaries

§ 14C-9. Tenure; minimum salaries. Any person employed as a teacher of transitional bilingual education whose teaching certificate was issued pursuant to Section 14C-8 of this Article shall have such employment credited to him for the purposes of determining under the provisions of this Code eligibility to enter upon contractual continued service; provided that such employment immediately precedes and is consecutive with the year in which such person becomes certified under Article 21 of this Code.<sup>1</sup>

For the purposes of determining the minimum salaries payable to persons certified under Section 14C-8 of this Article, such persons shall be deemed to have been trained at a recognized institution of higher learning.

Amended by P.A. 82-597, § 1, eff. Sept. 24, 1981.

<sup>1</sup> Paragraph 21-1 et seq. of this chapter.

### 14C-10. Parent and community participation

§ 14C-10. Parent and community participation. School districts shall provide for the maximum practical involvement of parents of children in transitional bilingual education programs. Each school district shall, accordingly, establish a parent advisory committee which affords parents the opportunity effectively to express their views and which ensures that such programs are planned, operated, and evaluated with the involvement of, and in consultation with, parents of children served by the programs. Such committees shall be composed of parents of children enrolled in transitional bilingual education programs, transitional bilingual education teachers, counselors, and representatives from community groups; provided, however, that a majority of each committee shall be parents of children enrolled in the transitional bilingual education program.

Added by P.A. 78-727, § 1, eff. Oct. 1, 1973.

### 14C-11. Preschool or summer school programs

§ 14C-11. Preschool or summer school programs. A school district may establish on a full or part-time basis preschool or summer school programs in transitional bilingual education for children of limited English-speaking ability or join with the other school districts in establishing such preschool or summer programs. Preschool or summer programs in transitional bilingual education shall not substitute for programs in transitional bilingual education required to be provided during the regular school year. Added by P.A. 78-727, § 1, eff. Oct. 1, 1973.

### 14C-12. Account of expenditures—Cost report—Reimbursement

§ 14C-12. Account of expenditures—Cost report—Reimbursement. Each school district shall keep an accurate, detailed and separate account of all monies paid out by it for the programs in transitional bilingual education required or permitted by this Article including transportation costs, and shall annually report thereon for the school year ending June 30 indicating the average per pupil expenditure. Each school district shall be reimbursed for the amount by which such costs exceed the average per pupil expenditure by such school district for the education of children of comparable age who are not in any special

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education program.

Applications for preapproval for reimbursement for costs of transitional bilingual education programs must be submitted to the State Superintendent's Office at least 60 days before a transitional bilingual education program is started, unless a justifiable exception is granted by the State Superintendent. Applications shall set forth a plan for transitional bilingual education established and maintained in accordance with this Article. Reimbursement claims for transitional bilingual education programs shall be made as follows:

Each school district shall claim reimbursement on a current basis for the first three quarters of the fiscal year and file a final adjusted claim for the school year ended June 30 preceding computed in accordance with rules prescribed by the State Superintendent's Office with the regional superintendent of schools, in triplicate, for approval on forms prescribed by the State Superintendent's Office. Data used as a basis of reimbursement claims shall be for the school year ended on June 30 preceding. School districts shall file estimated claims with the regional superintendent by October 10, January 10 and April 10 respectively, and file final adjusted claims by August 10. Upon receipt of such quarterly claims the regional superintendent shall transmit them to the State Superintendent by October 20, January 20, April 20, and August 20. The State Superintendent's Office before approving any such claims shall determine their accuracy and whether they are based upon services and facilities provided under approved programs. Upon approval he shall transmit by November 15, February 15, May 15 and September 20 the State report of claims to the Comptroller and prepare the vouchers showing the amounts due the respective regions for their school district's reimbursement claims. Upon receipt of the August final adjusted claims the State Superintendent shall make a final determination of the accuracy of such claims. If the money appropriated by the General Assembly for such purpose for any year is insufficient, it shall be apportioned on the basis of the claims approved.

Failure on the part of the school district to prepare and certify the final adjusted claims due under this Section on or before August 10 of any year, and its failure thereafter to prepare and certify such report to the regional superintendent of schools within 10 days after receipt of notice of such delinquency sent to it by the Superintendent's Office by registered mail, shall constitute a forfeiture by the school district of its right to be reimbursed by the State under this Section.

Amended by P.A. 79-1417, § 1, eff. Oct. 1, 1976.

### 14C-13. Advisory Council

§ 14C-13. Advisory Council. There is created an Advisory Council on Bilingual Education, consisting of 17 members appointed by the State Superintendent of Education and selected, as nearly as possible, on the basis of experience in or knowledge of the various programs of bilingual education. The Council shall advise the State Superintendent on policy and rules pertaining to bilingual education.

Initial appointees shall serve terms determined by lot as follows: 6 for one year, 6 for 2 years and 5 for 3 years. Successors shall serve 3-year terms. Members annually shall select a chairman from among their number. Members shall receive no compensation but may be reimbursed

for necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

Added by P.A. 84-710, § 1, eff. Jan. 1, 1986.

## APPENDIX F

### CHICAGO BOARD OF EDUCATION'S POLICY ON BILINGUAL EDUCATION

July 31, 1992

#### POLICY ON BILINGUAL EDUCATION

**SUBJECT:** Bilingual Education

**ISSUE:** The Board of Education of the City of Chicago is committed to bilingual education as an effective vehicle for providing students whose language is other than English a full measure of access to an equal educational opportunity as required under state and federal statutes. Bilingual education is defined as a means of providing instruction or other educational assistance through the home language of the student and of providing instruction in a second language. Bilingual education programs may be developmental, maintenance, or transitional.

The Board of Education of the City of Chicago also acknowledges the need to clarify responsibility for implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of bilingual education programs at the school and sub-district level, as well as the Central Service Center level. This need includes clarification of bilingual parent involvement that is consistent with state, federal, and school reform legislation, as well as disciplinary action to be taken by the Board against individuals, schools, or Central Service Center units that do not comply with state and federal laws relating to bilingual education.

At present, no policy exists to address these critical issues relating to bilingual education. A policy on bilingual education in the Chicago Public Schools is needed to ensure that all students whose language is other than English receive the services which the Board recognizes as essential, as well as to comply with state and federal mandates.

This policy builds upon previous actions and commitments as follows:

The Illinois General Assembly, in October of 1973, adopted Article 14C-Transitional Bilingual Education (Chapter 122) of *The School Code of Illinois*. This article is commonly referred to as the bilingual education mandate, and it is the basis for bilingual education program implementation in the state of Illinois.

The Board of Education of the City of Chicago passed a resolution on December 12, 1973 (Board Report 73-1382) entitled, "Resolution: The Education of the Non-English-Speaking Child" which recognized that "...bilingual education is an effective vehicle for granting the non-English-speaking child his full measure of access to an equal educational opportunity."

In October 1977, the Chicago Public Schools entered into an agreement with the Office for Civil Rights, United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare as described in the document entitled, *Plan for Implementation of the Provisions of Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964*. A section in this document, "Bilingual Education Programs," specifically addresses the course of action to be taken by the Chicago Public Schools relative to its "limited-English-proficient" students.

In April 1980, the U.S. Department of Justice invited the Board of Education of the City of Chicago to negotiate a settlement relative to compliance with the Illinois State Board of Education's rule on school desegregation. Negotiations resulted in the establishment of a Consent Decree on September 24, 1980. The Consent Decree calls for the Board of Education of the City of Chicago to provide bilingual education which is interpreted to mean, "...preserving the gains already made in implementing the bilingual education program and improving the program and the services it provides to children of limited-English proficiency" (*Student Desegregation Plan for the Chicago Public Schools, "Recommendations on Educational Components,"* Board of Education, City of Chicago, 1981, pp.51-58).

Revisions of the Chicago School Reform Act (made in 1991) establish the school bilingual advisory committee as a standing committee of the local school council. As such, the bilingual advisory committee is responsible for the planning, operation, and evaluation of services provided to all students whose language is other than English. The local school council is required to make decisions regarding the implementation of bilingual education programs with the collaboration of the bilingual advisory committee in order to comply with state and federal mandates.

## **HISTORY OF**

**BOARD ACTION:** Board Report 73-1382 (December 12, 1973) "Resolution: The Education of the Non-English-Speaking Child."

Board Report 81-84 (April 15, 1981) "Student Desegregation Plan for the Chicago Public Schools: Education Components."

Board Report 89-0614-CO5 (June 14, 1989) "Resolution: Guiding Principles on School Reform."

Board Report 90-0716-RS3 (July 16, 1990) "Resolution: Systemwide Educational Reform Goals and Objectives Plan."

Board Report 90-1219-RS3 (December 19, 1990) "Resolution: Reaffirmation of Chicago School Reform Principles."

Board Report 91-1023-PO1 (October 23, 1991) "Policy on Multicultural Education and Diversity."

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Board of Education of the City of Chicago is committed to the philosophy of bilingual education, the right of students whose language is other than English to equal educational opportunity, and the right of parents of students in the bilingual education program to be informed as to their rights. Further, the Board of Education of the City of Chicago supports the right of parents to full participation and access to all services and departments of the Chicago Public Schools. The Board of Education of the City of Chicago is committed to providing students whose language is other than English with effective programs of bilingual education as an integral part of its commitment to provide each student in the Chicago Public Schools with quality instructional programming. It is the responsibility of the Chicago Public Schools to follow all federal, state, and local guidelines regarding educational programs for students whose language is other than English. The Board believes that this strong commitment must be reflected in a policy that specifically relates to bilingual education in the Chicago Public Schools. The Board of Education of the City of Chicago affirms and embraces the following:

All children are guaranteed a free and appropriate education by both state and federal law. For students whose language is other than English, bilingual

education assures access to equal educational opportunities.

Students whose language is other than English are entitled to educational programs which provide opportunities for academic growth through the home language and for the acquisition of English as a second language.

In order to promote the positive self-esteem of all students whose language is other than English, bilingual education provides instruction on the history and culture of the country, territory, or geographic area of the student's origin and on the history and cultures of the United States in accordance with all requirements stipulated by Title 23 of the *Illinois Administrative Code*, Part 228.30 and Article 14C of *The School Code of Illinois*.

The Chicago Public Schools supports the philosophy of bilingual education and implements bilingual education programs in accordance with all requirements stipulated by state and federal statutes.

Students whose language is other than English are entitled to appropriately certificated bilingual personnel, space, equipment, and instructional materials and supplies, as well as access to all funds, at the same level of quantity and quality as students in the general program of instruction (Title 23 of the *Illinois Administrative Code*, Part 228.40).

Students whose language is other than English are entitled to participate in all programs including, but not limited to, the following: transitional, developmental, and maintenance bilingual education; special education; early childhood, gifted, vocational education; and state and federal Chapter 1 program services, as well as extracurricular activities. These services shall be provided in the home language as appropriate.

Continuous, innovative, and aggressive measures will be taken to actively recruit and staff certified and approved bilingual/ESL personnel to fill both state funded and board commitment bilingual education program positions, ensuring that the personnel assigned serve bilingual education program students optimally.

Each local school council of an attendance center which implements a bilingual education program is required to recognize the existing bilingual advisory committee as a functional standing committee of the local school council. Where no bilingual advisory committee exists, the local school council must establish a committee according to the "Procedures for Parent Involvement in Bilingual Education Programs." Committee members and officers are elected according to procedures and shall represent the languages served in the bilingual education program at the school. The majority of members and the committee chair must be parents of children enrolled in the bilingual education program. As a standing committee of the local school council, the bilingual advisory committee is responsible for the planning, operation, and evaluation of services provided to all students whose language is other than English. The principal and the local school council shall make decisions regarding the implementation of the

bilingual education program in consultation with the bilingual advisory committee pursuant to and consistent with federal and state mandates. Appropriate Central Service Center units shall monitor and provide support for the establishment of bilingual advisory committees in compliance with the State Bilingual Education Mandate and the Chicago School Reform Act.

Each sub-district is required to establish a sub-district bilingual advisory committee as a functional standing committee of the sub-district council. Membership should include all schools with bilingual education programs and all language groups served in the sub-district. The appropriate Central Service Center units will provide assistance and guidance. The majority of the members and the committee officers must be parents of children enrolled in the bilingual education program.

Article 14C of *The School Code of Illinois* establishes the Chicago Multilingual Parents Council (CMPC) to advise the appropriate Central Service Center units on matters pertaining to the development, implementation, and evaluation of bilingual education programs in the Chicago Public Schools. The membership of the CMPC is composed of delegates representing each sub-district bilingual advisory committee. The majority of members and all officers of the CMPC must be parents of children enrolled in the bilingual education program.

This policy and informational documents for principals, local school councils, and teachers providing services to students whose language is other than English which



detail the practices and procedures for implementing bilingual education programs as mandated by state and federal statutes will be distributed to all schools implementing bilingual education programs by appropriate Central Service Center units.

Local school principals and councils shall provide information to parents of students whose language is other than English and community members, as stipulated in Article 14C of *The School Code of Illinois* and Title 23 of the *Illinois Administrative Code*, by distributing informational documents which detail the rights and responsibilities of parents, students, local school council members, and school personnel in relation to the implementation of bilingual education programs. This information shall include, but shall not be limited to, bilingual education program entrance and exit criteria.

Training sessions for parents of students in the Chicago Public Schools shall be provided in home languages by local school staff and staff from appropriate Central Service Center units. Parent training activities will include, but not be limited to, workshops in schools, sub-districts, and the Central Service Center, as well as citywide parent institutes. Training activities will center on needs identified by parents at the schools with emphases on the philosophy of bilingual education, school reform, and parent/student rights.

Schools implementing instructional programs for students whose language is other than English will provide staff development programs for all faculty members, with the assistance and cooperation of the appropriate Central Service Center units, that will

improve the delivery of services for all students whose language is other than English and shall include these provisions in their School Improvement Plans.

All bilingual and English as a Second Language approved staff providing instructional services to students whose language is other than English must participate in a minimum of two staff development sessions per year as mandated by Title 23 of the *Illinois Administrative Code* (Part 228.40). A list of approved staff development sessions will be provided to the local schools by the appropriate Central Service Center unit.

Students in the Chicago Public Schools whose language is other than English will be systematically and meaningfully included in the annual Citywide Testing Program through home language achievement tests and other appropriate assessment instruments.

Procedures established for monitoring program compliance and assessing program effectiveness which meet the requirements of the Illinois State Board of Education shall be implemented at schools conducting bilingual education programs for students whose language is other than English by the appropriate Central Service Center units.

Procedures will be implemented to correct error conditions contributing to program non-compliance which include the possibility for sanctions and disciplinary actions against principals and local school councils refusing to implement bilingual education programs. Given due process and assistance by the appropriate Central Service Center

units, principals and other Board employees who do not implement bilingual education programs as prescribed by law or whose actions may lead to the disallowance of funds are subject to appropriate discipline by the Board.

In order to avoid the disallowance of funds due to program non-compliance, the Board, upon the recommendation of the General Superintendent of Schools, will take actions that may result in a corresponding reduction in the school's other non-restricted discretionary funds for the following school year.

Given due process and assistance by the appropriate Central Service Center units, local school councils which fail to remedy deficiencies or which make decisions that are contrary to program requirements are subject to a "Declaration of Non-Functioning Council" by the Board of Education of the City of Chicago and may be placed in receivership.

**RATIONALE:** The Board of Education of the City of Chicago assumes the responsibility and a leadership role in assuring that the Policy on Bilingual Education is implemented in all schools. The establishment of a policy on bilingual education will ensure that staff at all schools comply with the law and provide bilingual education or other educational assistance to students whose language is other than English in their home language, as well as provide English language development through English as a Second Language instruction.

**EDUCATIONAL  
REVIEW/  
IMPACT:**

Though federal and state mandates and the Chicago School Reform Act provide the framework to address the needs of students whose language is other than English, Board policy would serve to ensure that these students are granted access to an equal educational opportunity through effective bilingual education programs. This policy should define the responsibility for implementing and monitoring bilingual education

programs to provide full compliance with federal and state mandates as well as Board policy.

ANCIAL  
IEW/  
ACT:

This policy will be implemented within the Board's legal requirements and financial priorities.

AL REVIEW/  
ERENCES:

*Plan for Implementation of the Provisions of Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964* (October 1977).

Consent Decree, 1980, *United States v. Board of Education of the City of Chicago*, 554 F. Supp. 912 (N.D. Ill 1983).

*Student Desegregation Plan for the Chicago Public Schools, Recommendations on Educational Components*, Board of Education, City of Chicago, September 24, 1985.

Illinois Revised Statutes, Ch. 122, Article 14-C, Transitional Bilingual Education, *The School Code of Illinois*, 1985.

*Illinois Administrative Code*, Title 23: Education and Cultural Resources, Part 228, March 23, 1987.

Illinois Revised Statutes, Ch. 122, paras.34-2.2(d)(e), 4d, clause 14, lines 1424-1428, *The School Code of Illinois*, 1985.

APPENDIX G

GREETINGS FROM PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON ON THE  
25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF BILINGUAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS  
IN THE CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

July 27, 1995

Greetings to everyone celebrating twenty-five years of bilingual education programs in the Chicago Public Schools.

Excellence in education is the key to our nation's future. Until we have empowered every child with the tools she or he needs to learn and progress, we cannot truly say that we are prepared for the challenges of the next century. Because the number of students with limited proficiency in English is increasing every year, bilingual programs are essential to helping all children succeed in school.

For twenty-five years, teachers and administrators in the Chicago Public Schools have encouraged a diverse student body to reach high standards of academic achievement. Promoting the mastery of English as well as the development and maintenance of native languages, these dedicated educators have offered our youth equal educational opportunities and have given countless children a lifelong gift of learning.

I commend each of you for your accomplishments, and I wish you the best for much continued success.



APPENDIX H

THE CHICAGO CITY COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION,  
DECLARING MAY 1 - MAY 31, 1996, TO BE "SALUTE TO  
25 YEARS OF BILINGUAL EDUCATION  
IN THE CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS"

# A resolution

adopted by *The City Council*  
*of the City of Chicago, Illinois*



Presented by MAYOR RICHARD M. DALEY on FEBRUARY 7, 1995

*Whereas* , twenty-five years ago, pioneers in the field of language acquisition identified a sizable number of immigrant children entering Chicago schools who had little or no knowledge of English; and

*WHEREAS*, steps were taken to secure teachers for the targeted languages, and programs were begun to teach English to the children on a local basis, depending on the minimal resources which were available; and

*WHEREAS*, it was soon realized that federal, state and city funds and mandates would be needed to make the necessary bilingual educational programs a reality; and

*WHEREAS*, the State of Illinois mandated bilingual education through the following: "Resolution: The Education of the Non-English Speaking Child" (BR73-1382, on December 12, 1973), and Chicago Public Schools began initiating programs in schools based on numbers of limited English proficient students; and

*WHEREAS*, the Board of Education of the City of Chicago is committed to educational excellence and equity for all students, as reflected in its policies and practices; and

*WHEREAS*, the Chicago Public Schools acknowledged an agreement with the Office of Civil Rights (October, 1977) protecting the civil rights of limited English-proficient students; and

*WHEREAS*, the Chicago School Reform Bill (Senate Bill 1840, September, 1988) placed responsibility for bilingual education at the local school level and established bilingual advisory committees in schools with bilingual programs; and

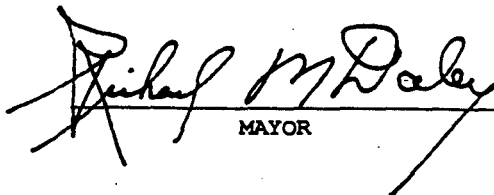
WHEREAS, the Board of Education adopted a "Policy on Multicultural Education and Diversity" (BR91-1023-POI, October 23, 1991), and through this action, "...acknowledges that cultural identity is inseparable from language and encourages all staff to affirm the importance of respecting the language of each student, with second language proficiency being a desirable goal and a reflection of a precious cultural heritage..." and


WHEREAS, the Board of Education of the City of Chicago ratified a "Policy on Bilingual Education" (BR92-0731-POI, July, 1992) which states that the Board is committed to "...providing students whose language is other than English with effective programs of bilingual education as an integral part of its commitment to providing each student in Chicago Public Schools with quality instructional programs;" and

WHEREAS, the policy further affirms that, "Students whose language is other than English are entitled to educational programs which provide opportunities for academic growth through the home language and for the acquisition of English as a second language;" and

WHEREAS, earlier this year, the Chicago City Council voted favorably on a resolution "...that the Board of Education of Chicago will maintain its historical commitment to educational policies and practices which support bilingual education and will not seek a waiver from the bilingual education mandate for the District #299;" now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the Mayor and members of the City Council of the City of Chicago, do hereby declare May 1 - May 31, 1996, to be "Salute to Linguistic and Cultural Diversity - Twenty-five Years of Bilingual Education in the Chicago Public Schools," in recognition of the pioneers, administrators, principals, teachers, teacher assistants and parent volunteers who have assisted hundreds of thousands of non-English speaking students adapt and succeed educationally in the American educational system.

  
MAYOR

  
CITY CLERK

APPENDIX I

SIX LARGEST BILINGUAL PROGRAMS IN THE  
CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN THE 1995-96 SCHOOL YEAR

CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL EDUCATION  
BILINGUAL STUDENTS THE 1995-96 SCHOOL YEAR

□□

THE SIX LARGEST BILINGUAL PROGRAMS

Spanish bilingual programs: 52,241 students

Polish bilingual programs: 4,692 students

Arabic bilingual programs: 1,054 students

Chinese bilingual programs: 1,046 students

Urdu bilingual programs: 1,043 students

Vietnamese bilingual programs: 847 students

□□□□

65,500 bilingual students

54,888 elementary school bilingual students

10,612 high school bilingual students

446 bilingual programs in 262 schools

□□□□□□

Bilingual education services are provided in the following  
languages: Arabic, Assyrian, Bosnian, Chinese, Greek, Gujarati, Haitian,  
Hindi, Khmer, Korean, Filipino, Polish, Russian, Spanish, Urdu, and  
Vietnamese



## APPENDIX J

### SUMMARY OF THE CHICAGO SCHOOL REFORM ACT OF 1995

House Bill 206, passed by the General Assembly and signed into law by the Governor of Illinois in 1995, created the Chicago Reform Board of Trustees and mandated Chicago public school reforms.

*The Superboard.* The mayor of Chicago appoints five people to the Chicago School Reform Board of Trustees to serve through June 30, 1999. Approval by the Chicago City Council is not needed.

*The Regular Board.* Beginning July 1, 1999, the mayor will appoint seven members to serve four-year overlapping terms. Approval by the Chicago City Council will not be needed.

*The Chief Executive Officer.* The mayor appoints a chief executive officer (CEO) to assume the powers of the superintendent through June 30, 1999, and sets his or her salary. The mayor may designate the board president as chief executive officer. Beginning in 1999, the board will select a general superintendent.

*The School Board.* The board may hire outside contractors to do work currently done by board employees. Staff who are affected may be laid off upon 14 days written notice.

*The Learning Zone.* The board will oversee any "learning zones" that are created under this legislation to free schools of state regulations, on an experimental basis.

*The Administrative Team.* The system's CEO must appoint a chief operating officer, a chief financial officer, a chief purchasing officer, and a chief educational officer, with the approval of the superboard.

*New Powers.* The law struck all references to subdistricts and subdistrict councils and transferred their powers and duties to the CEO. They include initiating action against failing schools, breaking LSC deadlocks over principal selection, and evaluating principals, in conjunction with LSCs.

*The Local School Council.* Parent and community members are elected or, in the case of teachers, appointed to staggered terms of four years each. To begin staggered terms, half the members elected and appointed in 1996 will serve for only two years; members will be asked to volunteer for such terms.

Local school councils approve receipts and expenditures for schools' internal accounts. They vote on requests for the use of school auditoriums and classrooms for "public lectures, concerts and other educational and social activities." They also approve fund raising activities by non-school organizations that use the school building.

Incoming members must undergo three days of training within six months of taking office or be removed. Training shall be provided through Chicago-area universities at the direction of the Dean of the College of Education at the University of Illinois at Chicago, and in consultation with the Council of Chicago-area Deans of Education. The board is not required to pay for the training.

Principals are required to give LSCs copies of audits of internal accounts, and any pertinent information generated by reviews of programs or operations.

*The Dismissal of Teachers and Principals.* The law streamlines the dismissal process. However, principals still must document cases against teachers, and LSCs must document cases against principals.

The CEO rather than the board will now approve or disapprove a principal's dismissal charges against a teacher and a LSC's dismissal charges against a principal.

Written warnings are no longer required for conduct that is "cruel, immoral, negligent or criminal or which in any way causes psychological or physical harm of injury to a student..." Instead, the general superintendent may move the case directly to a dismissal hearing, bypassing the 45-day remediation period required in other cases. Also, formal written warnings are no longer required for a "material breach of the Uniform Principal Performance Contract," except that a LSC must notify the principal in writing of the nature of the alleged breach at least 30 days before it votes to request dismissal.

*The Chicago Schools Academic Accountability.* The board, in consultation with the State Board of Education, will establish a Chicago Schools Academic Accountability Council to develop and carry out an evaluation system.

The CEO no longer has to wait at least a year to take harsh action -- e.g. replacing the LSC, principal or faculty -- against a school that is not living up to its school improvement plan or is violating laws or board rules. In addition, the CEO may take immediate action against a school that is determined to be in "educational crisis," as defined by board guidelines.

The legislation creates a four-year pilot program for board-supervised intervention at a "chronically underperforming school." The program provides for findings of fact and a public hearing before intervention may proceed. Under intervention, the CEO will select a new principal to guide the school for no longer than two years; the new principal will select all staff. In addition, the board can fire the old staff. Five percent of a school's state Chapter 1 money will be used for employee performance incentives.

*The Powers of Principals.* By giving principals the authority to supervise, evaluate, suspend and otherwise discipline all school employees, the law extends principals' control to their schools' maintenance and lunchroom staff.

Principals now have the authority to "determine when and what operations shall be conducted" within school hours and to schedule staff within those hours.

*School Budget.* The board now may use annual increases in state Chapter 1 money for the school system's budget. The law says schools must receive at least \$261 million each year in state Chapter 1 money for local, discretionary spending, which is the amount appropriated for 1994-95.

The board now has more flexibility in the use of state money. All categorical state funding will be put into one of two block grants. Money in the "general education" block grant may be used "for any of the board's lawful purposes." Money in the "educational services" block grant is more restricted in that the board is obligated to provide the services for which the original categorical funding was created. Included are bilingual education special education preschool for at-risk youngsters, and several other

programs. Even so, the board is encouraged to seek waivers of state spending requirements.

## APPENDIX K

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF VIETNAM AND VIETNAMESE REFUGEES

208-111 B.C.	The indigenous kingdom of Nam Viet flourishes.
111 B.C.-A.D. 939	Vietnam endures 1,000 years of Chinese rule.
939-1883	Vietnam enjoys 900 years of independence under various local dynasties.
1883-1945	French colonialists rule Vietnam.
1945	Ho Chi Minh declares the independent Democratic Republic of Vietnam.
1946-1954	First Indochina War occurs between France and the Viet Minh.
1954	The Geneva Accords divide the country into North and South Vietnam.
1955-1975	Second Indochina War, called the Vietnam War, pits North Vietnam, led by Ho, against the coalition forces of South Vietnam, led by Ngo, and the United States.
1973	The Paris Peace treaty is signed and American troops leave Vietnam.
1975	On April 30, Saigon, the capital of South Vietnam, falls to Communist troops, marking the end of the Vietnam War; 65,000 South Vietnamese are evacuated by the United States government.
1975	Four American resettlement camps receive 125,000 refugees and match them up with sponsors; the first wave of Vietnamese immigrants begins.
1976-1977	Secondary migration of first-wave refugees form communities in larger American cities.
1978	Ethnic Chinese Vietnamese flee overland to China and by boat to Southeast Asian ports

in response to persecution; beginning of the boat people exodus.

- 1979                    Border war between Vietnam and China erupts. Boat people continue to leave in large numbers, suffering hardships and piracy.
- 1979-1982              Second wave of Vietnamese immigrants to the United States.
- 1991                    Early United States census figures show Vietnamese to be third largest Asian-American immigrant group.

## APPENDIX L

### THE JOURNEY OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES TO AMERICA

In the decade before 1975, only about 20,000 Vietnamese immigrated to the United States. The first refugees from Vietnam fled to the United States in 1975. Their journey to America was directly related to the ending of the Vietnam War.

The Vietnamese, like the Cuban refugees from 1959 to 1962, sought refuge in the United States when communist governments came to power in their homelands. Most of the Vietnamese who came to the United States were resettled between mid-May 1975 and December 31, 1978.

The Vietnamese came to the United States for many reasons. Political, economic, or personal concerns motivated most to leave their homelands. Many of the refugees had been directly touched by the trauma of the Vietnam War and its aftermath. They left their nations and began the process of building new lives as Americans.

#### The Vietnamese Evacuation

On April 10, 1975, President Ford announced a plan for evacuating American and certain South Vietnamese citizens from Vietnam. This plan was announced nineteen days before Saigon fell. The evacuation plans that were developed and enacted during the last days were hurriedly put together.

The evacuation was characterized by confusion. The war was still under way. Rumors were rampant. There were fears of death lists and potential atrocities. Some Vietnamese were trying to leave Vietnam in any way that was possible. Because of the atmosphere surrounding the evacuation and the haste with which it took place, the South Vietnamese had little time to think about where they would go or what they would do when they resettled. Many did not realize that they were leaving their homeland forever.

With North Vietnamese troops on the outskirts of Saigon, President Ford put "Option Four" into action. Option Four was the helicopter rescue of Americans and high-risk South Vietnamese. Eight hundred marines were brought in to secure the evacuation of these people. Eighty-one helicopters were used to evacuate people from the United States Embassy in Saigon.

More than 7,000 people were evacuated from Saigon during those last hours. However, not everyone was evacuated. A few Americans were left behind. Most of them were newspaper correspondents and missionaries. Also left behind were thousands of South Vietnamese who had crowded around the American Embassy begging to be flown out of Vietnam. In the months and years to come, some of these individuals would find their own ways to leave Vietnam.

### The Refugees Enter the United States

The United States government had originally planned to admit only those Vietnamese who worked for the United States government or who were dependents of United States citizens. However, four days before the Saigon government fell, the United States government agreed to expand the criteria for determining who would be evacuated. Those whose lives would be endangered if they remained in Vietnam were allowed to enter the United States. In the end, however, the population of Vietnamese refugees admitted to the United States reflected other factors more than they reflected government admission criteria. The individual decisions of refugees to leave their homeland and their ingenuity in finding ways to leave determined the refugee population more decisively than did official government criteria.

By mid-May 1975, about 130,000 refugees had entered the United States or United States territories. In the fall of 1975, an additional 10,000 Vietnamese refugees were admitted to the United States. The Vietnamese refugees entered under the Indochinese Refugee Act of 1975. This act allowed the United States attorney general to grant parole status to Vietnamese refugees. The refugees were allowed to enter the United States, but they were not eligible to become permanent residents. Subsequently, Public Law 95-145, effective October 28, 1977, allowed refugees to change their status from parolees to permanent residents after a two-year residency in the United States.

### The 1975 Refugees

For many of the 140,000 Vietnamese, this was not their first experience as refugees. Many had been born in North Vietnam and had fled to the South as refugees after the 1954 defeat of the French.

As the first refugees began arriving in United States territories. They were a diverse group. Many were not dependents of American citizens or employees of the United



States government. It was apparent that a transition period was needed to help these refugees integrate into American society. Refugee camps were set up to provide the transition period.

### Refugee Camps

When Saigon fell in April, 1975, the refugees who were evacuated did not come directly to the United States. They went to United States bases overseas. Two such bases were Utao in Thailand and Subic Bay in the Philippines. From there, they were sent to receiving stations on Wake Island or Guam. When additional bases were needed to process the refugees, four relocation stations were opened on the United States mainland at Camp Pendleton outside San Diego, Fort Chaffee in Arkansas, Elgin Air Force Base in Florida, and Fort Indian Town Gap near Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

The centers were run by the Interagency Task Force (IATF) and the military. The IATF was a conglomeration of twelve agencies established on April 18, 1975, by President Ford. Its job was to coordinate the evacuation and resettlement of the Vietnamese refugees. The funds for the resettlement program were provided by the Indochina Migration and Refugee Assistance Act. This Act was passed by Congress on May 24, 1975.

The IATF contracted with nine voluntary agencies known as VOLAGS to handle the actual relocation of the refugees. The nine VOLAGS were: the United States Catholic Conference (USCC), the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services (LIRS), the International Rescue Committee (IRC), the United-HIAS, the Church World Service (CWS), the Travelers' Aid International Social Services, the Tolstoy Foundation, the American Fund for Czechoslovak Refugees (AFCR), and the American Council for Nationalities Services (ACNS).

These agencies were given funds (\$500 for each refugee) to help with resettlement expenses. The VOLAGS dispensed the money in a variety of ways. In some cases, the money was given in part or total to the refugee, and in other cases it was given to the refugee's sponsor. A portion of the money was usually retained by the VOLAG to cover administrative costs.

When the refugees arrived at the refugee camps, they were given temporary housing, food, clothing, and any needed security checks carried out by the Immigration and Naturalization Service, the CIA, the Department of Defense,

the Department of the Treasury, and in some cases the FBI. The refugees were given medical examinations and identification numbers.

English as a Second Language (ESL) programs were used in many of the resettlement schools to teach the refugees English. In some cases, the refugees were not allowed to use their native languages during school hours. A number of teachers in these programs did not speak any Vietnamese language. Most of the Vietnamese refugees spoke little, if any, English.

Individual states also had different responses to the refugees. Some states provided services at the resettlement centers. At Fort Indian Town Gap, Pennsylvania, the state provided educational services for both children and adults. This center's staff also conducted special programs for women and registered the adult refugees for employment. Other states tried to discourage refugees from settling within their borders. Some state officials voiced concerns about their states becoming centers for Vietnamese resettlement. These states did not send officials to register the refugees for employment.

#### Leaving the Refugee Camps

There were four ways for refugees to leave the resettlement centers. They could return to Vietnam, emigrate to another nation, demonstrate their ability to be self-supporting in the United States, or find an American sponsor. Each of these methods was used by the refugees. By December, 1975, 1,949 Vietnamese refugees had voluntarily returned to their homeland.

The United States government actively encouraged refugees to settle in other nations. Over 6,000 emigrated to other nations such as France and Australia; almost 4,000 settled in Canada. The relatively low number that resettled in other nations reflects the fact that few other nations encouraged immigration and many had established disincentives. In general, other nations were only willing to accept refugees who had relatives living within their borders, who spoke English or French, and/or who had marketable skills. Nations were particularly interested in professionals such as engineers, doctors, and dentists. In addition, most of the refugees wanted to remain in the United States.

Individuals who so wished, usually had little trouble finding sponsors in the United States. Nebraska, for example, offered to pay a yearly salary to refugees who were doctors while they studied for their United States medical examinations. These doctors were required to promise that they would practice in Nebraska for ten years. A few families were able to leave the refugee camps by showing that they were self-supporting. In 1975, a refugee family was considered self-supporting if the family could show proof of having at least \$4,000 per family member.

The majority of the Vietnamese left the resettlement centers with United States sponsors found by the VOLAGS. Becoming a sponsor was a major responsibility. In 1975 the cost to resettle a family of four was estimated at just over \$5,000. This figure included furniture, clothing, one month's rent, and food. The sponsor not only provided economic assistance (including medical care if needed), but also helped the head of the household to find a job, enroll their children in school, and help the family adjust to their new community. Moreover, since family problems, illness, and unemployment could occur, sponsorship was seen as a long-term commitment. If the sponsorship did not work out, the VOLAG was responsible for trying to find a second sponsor. Some sponsors were relatives of the refugees who were already living in the United States. Church congregations and other voluntary organizations also served as sponsors. Five states - Washington, Iowa, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Maine - provided sponsorship to the Indochinese refugees.

Some employers were also sponsors. However, initially employers were not considered for sponsorships because VOLAG personnel were concerned about a possible conflict of interest. Some of the employment/sponsor offers appeared to be motivated by a desire for cheap labor, domestic help, or the fulfillment of personal desires. However, as the VOLAGS encountered more pressure to process the refugees in 45 days, employment-related sponsorship was viewed more positively.

The refugees were able to reject offers of sponsorship freely until late August, 1975. After that date, rejecting sponsorships was strongly discouraged. By September, refugees were allowed to turn down no more than two offers of sponsorship. The refugees had many reasons for rejecting sponsorships. They included fear of isolation and separation from family members and fear of exploitation. However, the most often stated reasons for rejecting a

sponsorship at Fort Indian Town Gap were the cold climate of places like Maine and fear of racial prejudice.

All the refugees had left the camps and the camps were closed by late December, 1975.

### The Refugees after 1975

Subsequent events in Vietnam caused a large number of Vietnamese to leave their homeland. These people made up the second group of Vietnamese refugees who came to the United States after 1975. Like the first group, they were motivated by various economic, political, and personal reasons.

Vietnamese used their own resources to leave Vietnam. Some paid large sums of money to escape in fishing boats. The boats were small, poorly constructed, and unsuitable for travel on the high seas. The refugees sailed to places as near as Thailand and as far away as Australia. The journeys were long, tiring, and dangerous with the threat of unpredictable weather, pirates, and mechanical breakdowns. If the refugees survived the sea journey, they often faced hardships in refugee camps in Southeast Asia.

Even though there was some diversity within the second group of refugees it was socioeconomically much more homogeneous than the refugees who came to the United States in 1975. Most of the refugees who came after 1975 were not highly educated, did not speak English, and did not have marketable skills. As a group, they were neither urbanized nor westernized. Their expectations in terms of jobs and resettlement services tended to be lower than those of the earlier refugees. This later group had a larger number of severe health problems than did the 1975 refugees. Many had suffered trauma as a result of their escape from Vietnam and had been living in very difficult circumstances in refugee camps in Southeast Asia.

Compared to the 1975 refugees, the refugees who came after 1975 received less government support for resettlement. Those who received government help within their air fare to the United States had to sign a promissory note to repay a portion of that expense. Private volunteer agencies responsible for finding sponsors for them received a grant of only \$300 per refugee

In addition, these refugees did not go to resettlement centers. Some Vietnamese refugees were able to join their

relatives in newly formed Vietnamese communities in cities such as Los Angeles, New Orleans, and Dallas. This gave them an advantage that the first refugees did not have. They were able to depend on the support of thriving Vietnamese communities to help them bridge that the gap between the old, familiar Vietnamese culture and the new, sometimes baffling, American lifestyles and values.

### Adjusting to Life in the United States

The Vietnamese refugees have had varying experienced in the United States. Some have more than just adjusted to life in the United States; they have prospered. Some of the refugees, particularly those who were educated and middle class, were prepared to take advantage of employment and/or educational opportunities as they became available. These individuals are well on their way to achieving the American Dream. Their experience, however, had not been representative of the total refugee population. Many have found adjusting to life in the United States very difficult.

Many refugees have had to make a number of psychological, social, and economic adjustments. Their arrival in the United States was filled with the traumatic and emotional circumstances associated with the war and evacuation. The uncertainty of refugee status itself can cause psychological stress. Some refugees had to leave family members in Vietnam. In some cases, this has resulted in long-term depression. In addition, the culture shock of being thrust almost overnight into a new and different environment was jolting. This has meant exposure to a new language, values, lifestyles, and status.

While some refugees have been able to maintain or even improve their economic status, many have experienced dramatic downward economic mobility. For refugees who were middle class, adjusting to a lower-status job can be difficult. A number of people who were professionals in Vietnam have had to take jobs that do not reflect their training or former status. There are Vietnamese lawyers working as busboys or in factories, and doctors who are unable to practice medicine because of their lack of facility with English and their inability to meet United States professional requirements. In some families where the father has traditionally been a high wage earner, the wife or children now earn more money than he. In such situations the father may see his role as head of the family threatened. This can lead to a stressful situation for the entire family.

The tensions involved in downward economic and social mobility were not always understood by sponsors and sometimes led to conflict. Sponsors, who were keenly aware of their financial responsibilities and the difficulty of finding employment, sometimes found it hard to understand why a refugee would not take a particular job or how the family could ask for more financial support.

Conflict also resulted from the values the children learned at school and the behavior parents expected at home. In traditional Vietnamese culture, children are expected at home. In traditional Vietnamese culture children are expected to respect older persons. They demonstrate that respect by being quiet, polite, modest, and humble. These behaviors are often viewed negatively by United States teachers and school administrators. The American school tries to help children become more independent, vocal, and assertive. The conflicting behavioral expectations of the home and school sometimes confuse children and put them in the position of choosing one set of behaviors over the other. Such a choice devalues one set of behaviors and exalts the other.

The children also have to adjust to different methods of teaching. In Vietnam, most children are taught using the lecture method. Open discussions do not generally occur. Challenging or questioning a teacher is considered rude and impolite. Discovery learning also is not typically practiced in Vietnamese schools.

## VITA

Joseph Hieu is a learner. He has attended a number of American universities, including Loyola University, Northwestern University, and the University of Chicago.

Joseph Hieu is an educator. He has taught at the National School of Social Work, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and the National Louis University, among others.

Joseph Hieu is a writer. He has written two bilingual books and is the editor of *Asian Americans 2002: Building Unity in Diversity* (in press).

## ABSTRACT

After a review of the literature on bilingual education in the United States and related government mandates, this paper explores, through in-depth interviews, the attitudes of Vietnam-born parents toward bilingual education programs in which their children matriculated in Chicago public secondary schools during the 1995-96 school year. Further, it relates the parents' opinions to specific demographic factors: 1) level of education; 2) level of income; 3) era of emigration; 4) reasons for leaving Vietnam; and 5) rigors of the journey to America.

Although the sampling was small, research indicates that early era (first wave) immigrant parents with higher levels of education and more advantaged socioeconomic status favor all-English-language education for their children, with bilingual programs chiefly for enrichment. On the other hand, late era (second wave) immigrants with less education and lower socioeconomic status view bilingual programs as essential for their children's success in learning English and succeeding in school.

The interview research, along with a review of the literature, indicates that not all immigrant families -- even within the same ethnic group -- want or need the same kinds of bilingual programs. Implicit in this finding are new and revised roles for schools, parents, and government, as outlined in the final chapter.



## APPROVAL SHEET

The dissertation submitted by Joseph Hieu has been read and approved by the following committee:

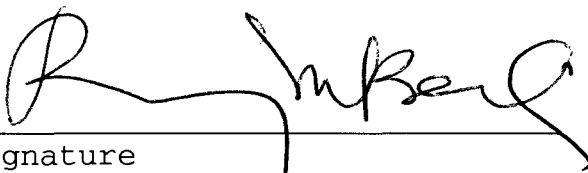
Dr. Barney M. Berlin, Director  
Associate Professor, Curriculum and Instruction  
Loyola University of Chicago

Dr. Allan C. Ornstein  
Professor, Curriculum and Instruction  
Loyola University of Chicago

Dr. Robert C. Cienkus  
Associate Professor, Curriculum and Instruction  
Loyola University of Chicago

The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval by the committee with reference to content and form.

May 7, 1997  
Date

  
Signature